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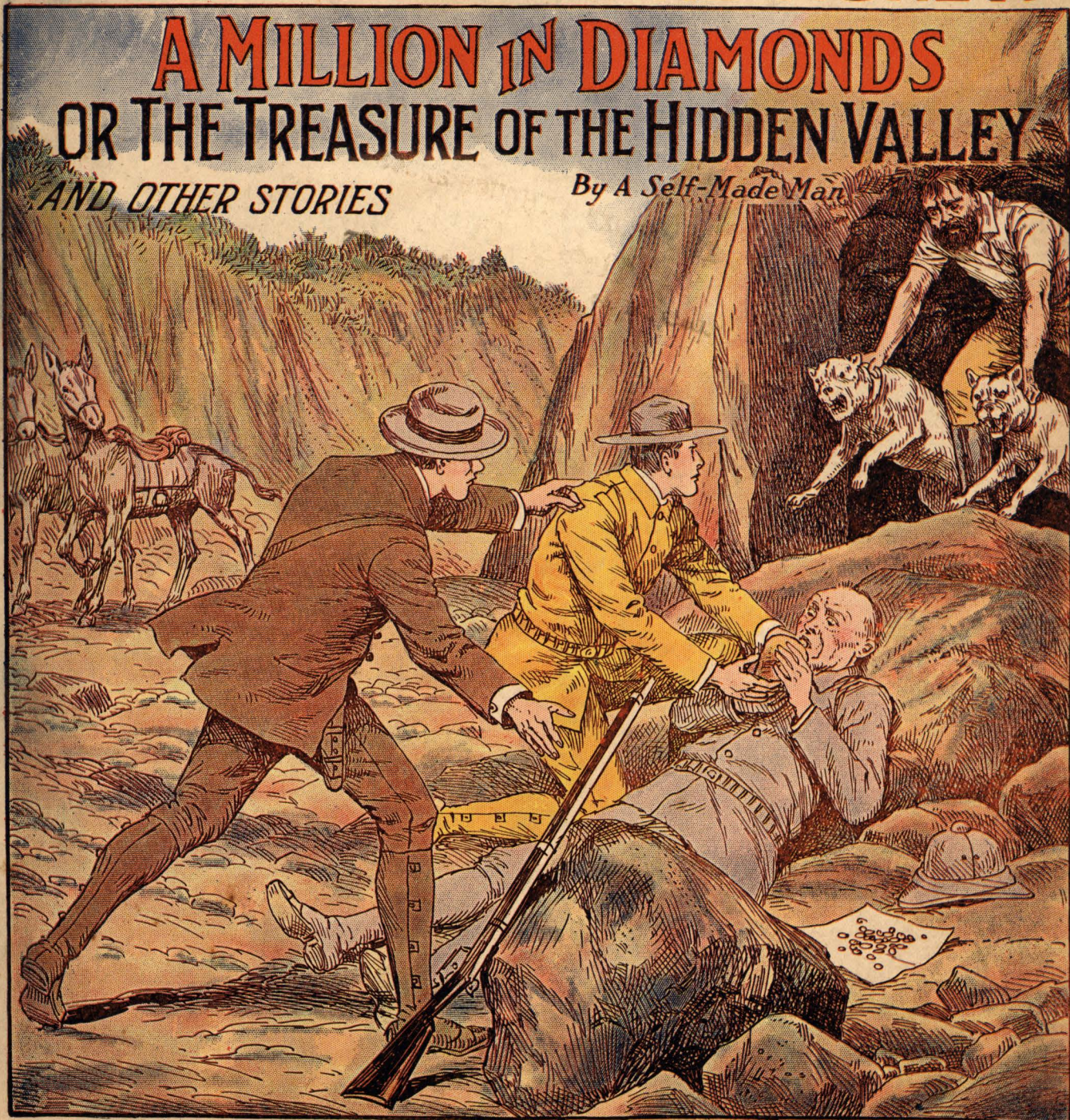
FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY.

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY.

A MILLION IN DIAMONDS OR THE TREASURE OF THE HIDDEN VALLEY

AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self-Made Man



As Jack placed the flask to the old man's lips Dick uttered an ejaculation of alarm. "Look!" he cried, pointing. Jack turned and saw a sight that took away his breath—a fierce-looking man about to release two vicious dogs.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

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NEW YORK, JUNE 21, 1912.

Price 5 Cents.

A MILLION IN DIAMONDS

OR,

THE TREASURE OF THE HIDDEN VALLEY

BOOKS BOUGHT & EXCHANGED

J. P. CAIN

By A SELF-MADE MAN

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CHAPTER I.

A SCHOOL PRINTING OFFICE.

"Look here, fellows, I'm sick of this grind!" cried Jack Riddle, waving a composing stick in the air. "This place is more like a prison than a school."

"You bet it is, and I'm just as sick of it as you are," said his particular friend, Dick Thompson. "A healthy school this is where all of us have had to learn the printing business to help the Reverend Mr. White get out his weekly paper, the Banner of Light, and various other religious publications, free, gratis and for nothing, except the cost of ink and paper."

"What can we do?" asked Steve Bassett, who had a galley proof and a bunch of copy in his hand which he was about to take to the Rev. Mr. White's study, where he expected to be detained as copyholder while the pious head of the scholastic establishment read the proof. "Every time a fellow makes a kick for his rights he is marched to the Black Hole and kept there on bread and water till his heart is broken."

"That's right. It's a dead shame the way we're treated," said Tom Bates.

"The only way we can make a change is to stick together and put up a stiff fight," said Jack. "The Rev. White can't send us all to the Black Hole at one time, for it won't hold more than two or three without squeezing. It's only intended to accommodate one prisoner at a time. If we make a bold stand none of us will go to the Black Hole. The Rev. White will have to yield to our demands if we go on strike in a body."

"Sure he will!" chipped in Dick. "If we all refuse to set another line of type unless we get our half holiday back, how is he going to get his paper out?"

"He'll have to hire regular comps and pay 'em whatever they charge a thousand ems, and that would send him into a fit," said Bassett.

"Where would he get compositors around here? He might borrow one from the office in town, but one man couldn't get the Banner of Light out, even with Batt Vickers' help. He'd have to send to 'Frisco for at least two men and pay their fare here. That would make a hole in his weekly profits," said Jack.

"Cheese it! Here comes Batt!" cried a small youth named Billy Burns, who had posted himself as a lookout at the door opening on the passage between the printing office and the kitchen.

There was an immediate scattering to their type cases of the bunch of rebellious amateur typos, and when Batt Vickers, a tall, thin, red-headed and sour-looking boy, who occupied the important position of foreman of the room, made his appear-

ance in the office the silence was broken only by the click of type as they were dropped into the steel composing sticks.

Vickers was a bully who enjoyed the Rev. Mr. White's confidence and favor.

He was presumed on the same level with the other boys in the school, but as a matter of fact he was accorded many privileges denied to the others.

He was permitted to browbeat his schoolmates with impunity, and where he could safely use physical force to make the weaker ones knuckle down to him he did not hesitate to do it, and the Rev. Mr. White paid no attention to the protests made against him.

The Rev. Mr. White's Academy was situated on the suburbs of the small town of Edenvale, on the line of the Central Pacific Railroad (via Niles), between San Francisco and Sacramento, and the period of our story is a matter of thirty-five years ago.

The three leading actors in the events that follow are now men fifty years of age, and it was from one of them that the author got the facts concerning the marvelous diamond valley from which the hero and his two friends succeeded in bringing away a million dollars' worth of the rough gems.

An account of their adventures was printed in the Sacramento and San Francisco papers at the time of their return, so that it is quite possible to verify the facts on which this story is founded.

The academy in question united some of the features of an industrial school, inasmuch as the boys had to apply themselves to sundry pursuits when not engaged at their studies.

The scholars had to make their own beds and keep their dormitory in good order.

They had to work in the extensive truck patch at the back of the fenced-in yard.

They had to clean windows, help the cook get the meals, and wait on table in turn.

And finally they were instructed in the art of printing, participating in the publication of a religious weekly of limited circulation, edited and published by the Rev. Mr. White.

A weekly tract also emanated from the reverend gentleman's printing office, as well as divers specimens of job printing, more remarkable for originality in composition than for typographical beauty.

The type used had all been purchased secondhand, after the sharpness of its face had been worn down considerably.

The reverend gentleman prided himself on the large assortment of display fonts he had gathered together at bargain rates because they had outlived their usefulness, and the advertisements set up in these job faces were weird to a de-

gree, owing to the preponderance of fancy type that had gone out of style.

The routine of the school was study and recitations from eight in the morning till noon on every day but Saturday.

Dinner was then served and from half-past twelve to half-past one the boys were permitted to amuse themselves in the big yard, as it suited them.

The bell then summoned them to the printing office, where they worked until six.

Small squads, however, took turns both morning and afternoon in the truck patch, and attended to such other labor as was required of them.

Until a month since the boys enjoyed a half-holiday on Saturday afternoon, as the paper was printed on Friday afternoon, but the Rev. Mr. White having purchased a large font of cast-off small pica—the point system had not been introduced at that time—he secured the contract for printing a small religious book, so the boys were compelled to work on it Saturday afternoons and two hours each evening besides.

This led to a great deal of kicking on their part, but the only satisfaction they got was a twenty-four hours' imprisonment in the Black Hole, on a bread-and-water diet, which the pious principal found quite effectual in curbing them.

Nevertheless, matters seethed under the surface like a rumbling volcano, and a spark only was needed to bring matters to an active crisis.

When Batt Vickers entered the printing office, as we have already described, he had a proof in his hand fairly covered with marks.

It represented the labored composition of a new recruit lately received at the school—a sensitive, pale-faced lad, who had been sent to the academy by his guardian to get him out of the way.

Indeed, most of the boys were either hard cases, who had been thrown out of other private schools for good cause, or whose parents or guardians wanted to be rid of them at home for one cause or another.

The lad in question, whose name was Bert Dixon, was really out of place in that academy, just as Jack Riddle, Dick Thompson, Tom Bates and one or two others were out of place, for he was a good boy, accustomed to the gentle influence of a good home, until his mother died, leaving him with a few thousand dollars' legacy in trust in the hands of a distant relation of the family, who was appointed his guardian.

The guardian, whose name was Noah Davis, lost no time in sending Bert to the Rev. Mr. White's academy, for he and White were friends and knew each other very well indeed.

Jack Riddle and Dick Thompson had cottoned to Bert at once, and sizing him up as an easy mark for the rest of the bunch to impose on, they had taken him under their wings and given the others to understand that Bert was to be left alone or there would be something doing.

As Jack and Dick had proved, in two or three pitched battles with the best fighting talent of the school, that they were able to clean up any opponent rash enough to tackle them, their orders were received with respect and followed.

The only person who paid no attention to their mandates was Batt Vickers.

He was afraid of both Jack and Dick, after having seen evidences of their prowess, and was not anxious to have a run-in with them, but his bullying instincts were so well developed that he could not resist the temptation to take advantage of Bert's gentle ways.

He had not attacked him in earnest yet, but he annoyed him in a hundred ways, and as Bert offered no resistance he was gradually growing bolder, relying on the protection of the pious principal to take his part against Jack and Dick, if those lads butted in.

The proof in question was the first attempt at regular typesetting made by Bert, after several days' practice on short paragraphs.

Batt had expected he would make numerous typographical errors when he started him on the copy—a manuscript sermon written or cribbed by the Rev. Mr. White.

Bert, however, not only came up to the foreman's expectations, but went so far beyond it that Batt, who had to read the proof in White's office, got a calling down from the reverend gentleman for taking such a long time in marking down the errors on the margin, and another calling down because Bert had done such bad work under his supervising eye.

Under these circumstances Batt was in a bad humor when he returned to the printing office.

He halted beside Bert, who was now putting in his time trying to distinguish a p, q, b and d when mixed up in his hand as well as a u and an n

"Say," said Batt, "what kind of type-sticking do you call this?" and he held the corrected proof under Bert's nose.

Bert looked at the slip, which fortunately represented a little less than the third of a galleyful, set in a 13-em measure, and gasped.

There was hardly a vacant spot on both sides that was not filled up with a pencil mark indicative of an error.

Then there were omitted words and sentences and repetitions of the same that added to the confused jumble.

It was easier by far to reset the few paragraphs than to lose time correcting the errors.

"Did I do that?" asked Bert, trying to recognize his own work.

"Did you do it?" roared Batt. "Who do you suppose did it, you pig-headed idiot? Maybe you think I set it," he added, sarcastically.

"Did you?" asked Bert, innocently.

As Batt prided himself on being the best printer in the school, which, to give him due credit, we may say he was, the mere suggestion that he was the author of such a proof fairly maddened him.

With a blow of his fist he knocked Bert spinning against the case behind, and as a galley of newly set type, waiting for a sidestick and quoins to be proved, stood there, the concussion of Bert's body tipped the frame up and his extended arm completed a wholesale "pl" of the type.

The call-down Batt had started in to give Bert naturally attracted general attention, and Jack, looking for trouble, had laid down his stick.

He did not expect that Batt would strike Bert, but when he saw the bully do it—and a brutal blow it was, too—he made one dive for the end of the "alley" and handed the young foreman such a smash in the side of the jaw that he went down like a steer in the shambles and lay in a dazed condition on the floor.

CHAPTER II.

OPEN REBELLION.

"Bully for you, Jack!" cried Steve Bassett. "Give him one for me, too!"

The printing office was thrown into great confusion.

Composing sticks were dropped on the cases; the boy who was helping Batt "make up" one of the pages of the paper on the stone dropped a small paragraph of type across a column rule; Billy Burns, who was kicking an old-style 7x11 Gordon jobber, took his foot off his treadle, which caused that useful appendage to jump and bang away at a rate which threatened to demoralize the press; while the boys who were turning the handle of the wheel that furnished motive power to run the Adams power press, on which the two outside pages of that week's edition of the Banner of Light were being run off, stopped work and gaped in the direction of the scene of trouble.

Such was the condition of things when the Rev. Mr. White entered the room with some fresh copy in his hand.

"Wha—what does this mean?" he said, in a tone sufficiently loud to call the attention of the boys to his presence, whereupon there was a confused rush on their part to get busy again.

All except Jack returned to their places.

He stood over Batt Vickers, who was recovering from the jab, asking him if he wanted any more.

The pious proprietor of the school took in the situation at a glance.

Apparently there had been a fight between his foreman and Jack Riddle, and Batt had got the worst of it.

Whether Batt was to blame in the affair was a matter of no consequence to the reverend gentleman.

Discipline had to be maintained in the printing office as well as in other parts of the school.

Batt had, clearly, in his eyes, been trying to uphold order and had been overpowered by the boys.

Jack Riddle, from his prominence, he regarded as the ring-leader of the opposition, therefore he must be made an example of or chaos would ensue.

"Riddle," he said, severely, "how dare you leave your case and attack the head of this room?"

"You'd better ask Vickers why he hit Bert Dixon the cowardly blow he did," replied Jack, fearlessly.

"Vickers is in charge of this office and it is his duty to maintain discipline," said the Rev. Mr. White.

"He isn't supposed to maintain it by slugging the meekest boy in the school."

Batt had got on his feet by this time and was holding his injured jaw with one hand as if he was afraid it might fall apart.

The blow, having been a powerful one, impressed Batt with the idea that Jack had struck him with a "shooting-stick," which is a round steel implement about a foot in length, used to "lock up" forms.

"Riddle tried to murder me," he said, dolefully.

"Murder you!" gasped the reverend principal, appalled at the idea.

"He hit me with a shooting-stick and nearly broke my jaw," said Batt.

"You're a liar!" flashed Jack. "I hit you with my fist."

"You had something in your fist."

"I had nothing in it," returned Jack.

"You can't tell me that. I felt something harder than your fist."

"We will have no further argument on the subject," said the reverend gentleman. "You stand convicted of striking the foreman, Riddle, and your punishment will be forty-eight hours in the Black Hole. Follow me."

"I protest against such an unjust sentence," said Jack.

"I accept no protest. Discipline must and shall be maintained. It is the rule of this establishment that the guilty shall suffer. You will go to the Black Hole."

"You'd better send Dixon there with him for setting such a dirty proof," said Vickers.

"No, Dixon is only a beginner at the art and can't be expected to do much better at the start. You should have paid more attention to his efforts and not let him go ahead when it was clear he was not competent to set type yet."

"That's right. Give it to him, Mr. White," said Dick, with a grin.

"Who spoke?" asked the reverend gentleman, not liking the remark.

"I did," said Dick, boldly.

"You will work an hour overtime by yourself for impertinence."

"I only offered the suggestion, sir."

"You will go without your supper this evening, and continue working while the rest are in the refectory."

"What for?"

"For answering me back in the strain you did."

"Moses; do you want to starve me?" exclaimed Dick, who, having an uncommonly fine appetite, which was always in working order about meal-time, strongly objected to be deprived of his supper, even if it was the least conspicuous meal of the day.

"If you utter another word you shall have nothing but bread and water for your breakfast," said the Rev. Mr. White.

Dick shut up, but he was boiling over with indignation, which only waxed the hotter when he perceived the satisfied grin on Vickers' face.

He shook his fist menacingly at the foreman, with a look that said, "Wait till I get a chance at you and I won't do a thing to you!"

At this interesting juncture Bert advanced to the reverend gentleman and begged him to let Jack off from the terrors of the Black Hole.

His words were only wasted, for the Rev. Mr. White never rescinded a sentence he had once passed.

Though he frequently preached, editorially, in the Banner of Light of the divine attribute of mercy and forgiveness to sinners, he was somewhat lax in the practice thereof himself.

At any rate, he was adamant when it came to forgiving Jack, or any other sinner in his own establishment.

He started for the door after once more commanding the boy to follow him.

Jack, however, did not follow him.

Looking around upon his fellow-students and co-workers, he believed the time was ripe for bringing matters to a focus.

He walked as far as the head of the imposing stone and stopped there.

When the Rev. Mr. White reached the door he turned around with the idea of sending the culprit, whom he supposed to be at his heels, ahead of him.

He was astonished to find that Jack had not obeyed his orders.

"Riddle!" he cried, authoritatively.

"Sir," responded Jack.

"I ordered you to follow me. Come here at once, do you hear?"

"I hear you, but I'm not coming, just the same."

Here was open rebellion and the pious gentleman fairly gasped.

"Vickers," he said, "get another boy to help you and bring him here."

Batt looked helplessly around the office, for he knew not a boy would stand in with him against Jack.

"Do you hear me, Vickers?" cried the Rev. Mr. White, impatiently.

"Yes, sir; but nobody'll help me."

"You haven't ordered any one to."

"Bunker," said Vickers, picking out a tough lad Jack had vanquished in a ten-round battle, "lend me a hand."

"Nixy!" replied Bunker. "Get some one else."

"Glidden, I order you to——" said Vickers, turning to another boy.

"I've got a lame arm," objected Glidden.

The Rev. Mr. White was now hot under the collar.

"You, Glidden and Bunker, do as the foreman ordered you to," he said.

"Fellows," cried Jack, "the time has come for action. United we stand a show, divided we are up against it every minute. I'm not going to be put in the Black Hole. Who stands by me?"

"All of us!" shouted the boys.

"You hear, Mr. White?" said Jack. "We have stood this Black Hole business as long as we're going to. We have stood a bread-and-water diet as long as we are going to. Treat us decently and we'll do our duty, though we do lots of things we hadn't ought to be asked to take a hand in. We want you to abolish the Black Hole and restore our half holiday. Unless you agree we won't set another type on your paper or on anything else that comes in the office. That's our ultimatum."

The Rev. Mr. White immediately exploded in a rage.

"I will see who's master here," he roared. "You shall be tied to a post and flogged for inciting the boys to rebel. I order you boys back to your cases on the pain of a bread-and-water diet for a week. You, Burns, return to your press; and you, Jones and Bissell, start up that Adams machine this instant!"

The Rev. Mr. White glowered upon them, but not a boy offered to obey.

"Very well—very well," said the principal. "You shall all rue this moment."

With those words he left the room.

"Bolt the door," said Jack.

"Hold on a minute," said Dick. "We have struck for our rights, and must stand or fall on the issue, so we want no enemy in our midst. Fire Vickers out and then lock the door."

Half a dozen pairs of hands seized Batt Vickers and he was rushed into the passage with such speed that he tripped over the sill and measured his length on the floor.

Then the door was locked.

"Shove the proof-press against it," ordered Jack.

It was done.

"Now, fellows, shut the windows and fasten them. We're going to hold this fort at all hazards."

He posted a boy watcher at each of the four windows where type stands were, and Billy Burns at the window near the Adams book-press.

The edition was only half run off, but the press was not likely to turn a wheel again that day.

A council of war was held and each of the boys swore he would stand by Jack, sink or swim.

Bert took no active part in the proceedings, for he wasn't built on warlike lines, but his heart was in the fight, just the same because he sympathized with his new friends, Jack and Dick, who were leading the rebellion.

He blamed himself for being the innocent cause of the trouble, but short as had been his experience at the academy he could not help seeing that conditions needed reforming, and if this was to be accomplished it could only be brought about by a bold and concerted move.

The Rev. Mr. White, in the course of fifteen minutes, returned by way of the passage, accompanied by Batt and his two general helpers, stout, able-bodied men.

They found their way blocked by the bolted door, fortified by the barricade of the proof-press.

The reverend gentleman called on the boys to open up, but no attention was paid to his demand.

As he didn't care to damage his own property, he and the men retreated and soon appeared at the window near the Adams press.

They found it closed and the catch on.

Looking through the glass, the Rev. Mr. White saw the boys skylarking inside.

The sight did not improve his already ruffled temper.

He tapped on the window.

No one paid any attention to him.

He ordered the window to be opened, but without result. Then he led his backers to the other four windows in turn, but found them all down and tight also.

He was at his wit's end.

His authority was defied by the whole school, Batt Vickers excepted.

The boys were enjoying his discomfiture hugely.

At this juncture an idea occurred to Dick Thompson.

He saw the Rev. Mr. White conferring with Batt and the two hired men a few feet from the windows on the right-hand side of the printing office, which was a one-story ell.

On the opposite side he had noticed that the garden hose was attached to the faucet against the building.

Taking Steve Bassett into his confidence, and without saying anything to Jack, who with Bert and several others was watching the enemy from the end window, he opened the window above the spot where the hose was, got out and handed the nozzle in to Steve.

That youth dragged the hose into the room.

"Turn off the nozzle cock, Steve," said Dick.

Steve did so and then Dick turned on the water full force. The hose swelled out as the water rushed into it.

Dick climbed back into the room and shut the window down on the hose.

He and Steve pulled the hose across the room.

Half the boys in the room immediately got wise to what was on the tapis and set up a shout of glee.

Before Jack got on to the trick the other window on his side was raised, the nozzle pointed at the foe, and a stream of water was turned on the reverend gentleman and his allies, deluging them from head to foot and half blinding them.

CHAPTER III.

THE END OF THE MUTINY.

The rebels yelled with delight at the consternation the water carried into the ranks of the enemy.

Even Jack, who had not proposed to turn their defense into aggression, was quite tickled over the trick, and did not attempt to oppose its continuance.

The ex-minister and his aides beat a hurried and undignified retreat.

As the water had been particularly directed at him as long as he remained within range of the house, he looked not unlike a drowned rat.

As soon as their enemies retired out of sight around the corner of the ell, the nozzle cock was closed and the hose carried back to the other window, where Steve held the nozzle ready to drench any one who approached the faucet to turn the water off.

The Rev. Mr. White was now feeling desperate.

He had half a mind to have the passage door battered in so that he and his assistants could get at the ringleaders of the rebellion.

Batt, however, suggested that the town police be summoned to reduce the boys to submission.

"Then when you get hold of Riddle, Thompson, Bassett and Burns you can tie them up and have the men flog them till they yell for mercy," he said.

The reverend gentleman thought the idea a good one, and told Batt to change his clothes and start on the errand.

Leaving his two hired men on watch, he went into his private quarters to make a change in his own apparel.

"I wonder what will be the next move against us?" said Dick.

"We'll know when it comes off," said Jack.

"The Rev. Mr. White has posted a watcher on both sides of the building so as to keep tab on us," said Bassett.

"That won't prevent us from leaving by the passage if we want to," said Jack.

"Vickers has likely been posted there to prevent that."

"Vickers! Who cares for him? We'll open the door and see if he's there. If he is I vote we capture him and hold him a prisoner."

Jack's suggestion met with approval, so the proof-press was

pulled away and the door opened, but there was no one in the passage.

"It's close to six o'clock, fellows. We are likely to go hungry to-night," said Jack.

"Let's make a raid on the kitchen and help ourselves," suggested Billy Burns, who was ripe for anything of that kind.

"You forget that the cook is a husky woman who would make things warm for us."

"If we made a rush of it she wouldn't have a show to do anything."

The boys began licking their chops as they thought of supper, and they didn't fancy the idea of missing it.

They were for making a raid on the kitchen at once.

Jack was general enough to know that an empty stomach was a bad thing to hold out on.

It was quite possible that the bulk of his crowd would throw up the fight and leave him and the other ringleaders to their fate.

Such a thing has often happened in the case of unorganized crowds of men, who have deserted their leaders the moment the shoe began to pinch.

Under such circumstances Jack decided to fortify his adherents with food.

He was about to order an advance on the kitchen when the door of that room opened and a young girl, employed as housemaid by Mrs. White, came into the passage.

She was on good terms with Jack, Dick and one or two other scholars.

"Hello, Mazie!" said Jack. "You're not against us, are you?"

"Oh, dear no!" replied the girl, coming forward. "I came to tell you that Batt Vickers has just gone into town to fetch the police."

"The dickens!" exclaimed Jack, blankly. "That's a serious matter."

The news carried consternation into the ranks of the insurgents.

"We'll have to give in," said one of the boys.

"Give in!" cried Jack. "Why, we'll be tyrannized over worse than ever. We've got to hold out to the last ditch."

"What's the use? It will only be worse for us in the end," said another.

"If that's the way you chaps feel you'd better surrender yourselves right away and try and square yourselves with the Reverend White. After he has given you a good licking and sent you to bed without your supper, perhaps you'll be forgiven."

"What are you going to do?"

"Hold out, of course. Two or three of us are in for a flogging and the Black Hole. As we can't hold out forever we'll have to make tracks from here as soon as it's dark, unless we all stick together and fight this thing out."

"We can't fight the police."

"Why not? Not more than two are likely to come. That will make six against us, though I don't consider that the Reverend White and Batt count for much. My idea is to raid the kitchen first and then stand an all-night siege. If matters get too hot we'll threaten to wreck the printing office. It won't take us very long to pl every type in the place. Then the Banner of Light will have to suspend publication for awhile. We are in the position to make terms, and you chaps are fools if you don't take advantage of this chance," harangued Jack.

The weak-kneed ones looked dubious.

Their courage was fast oozing away and Jack saw that he could not depend on any one save Dick, Bert (who was devoted to him), Billy Burns, Steve Bassett and probably Tom Bates.

"See what the cook is doing, Mazie," said Jack.

The girl looked into the kitchen and reported that she was out in the yard talking to one of the hired hands.

"Now is our chance, fellows. Get a wiggle on."

The only ones who had the nerve to follow him were those above mentioned.

The others held back, afraid of the consequences.

Led by Jack, the plucky five entered the kitchen and found a piece of roasted meat, done to a turn, kept hot in the oven, the door of which was partly open.

"Here you are!" said Jack, pulling out the dish and handing it to Billy.

Dick hustled around and found a number of knives and forks which he dropped in his pocket.

He captured the carving-knife and fork off the table.

Bassett rushed away with the pot full of potatoes.

Bates grabbed two loaves of bread and the pot of butter.

Altogether the boys made a pretty clean sweep of the more important articles intended for supper.

Then they retreated to the printing office and barricaded the door again.

Everything was placed on the imposing stone without regard to the half-made-up form of the two inside pages of the Banner of Light.

Seizing the carving-knife and fork Jack commenced to slice the meat, after directing Dick to cut the loaves into slices.

The boys gathered around the stone, two and three deep, the smell and looks of the roast making their mouths water.

A slice of the meat was laid on a slice of bread and passed to a boy.

Bassett handed out a potato.

This procedure was repeated until every one, including Jack himself, had been supplied.

Billy was then appointed carver to supply a second helping.

A rice pudding had been captured, and this was dished out on folded slips of paper.

As the food disappeared down the throats of the boys their courage began to rise again, and by the time every one had been satisfied they were as ripe for mischief and rebellion as ever.

Watch had been kept on the men outside to see that they did not get near the windows to learn what was going on.

The fat cook was still talking to one of them, for she had nothing to do until she got orders from Mrs. White.

One of the boys who had not figured to any great extent in the uprising so far, except to lend his moral support to it, began feeling gay with a full stomach, and perceiving what an elegant mark the cook made for the hose, turned the water on her without warning.

The jet hit her on the back of the neck with such sudden force that, under the impression she had been shot, she uttered a yell and fell to the ground.

In that position she was thoroughly drenched, from head to foot, and the man got it in his face when he tried to rescue her.

The excitement brought the other guard around to see what was the matter.

At the same moment Batt and two policemen appeared on the scene, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. White.

Billy Burns grabbed the nozzle and turned the water on Batt, but he was spry enough to get out of reach.

The water was then turned off at the cock.

The policemen advanced on the windows.

"Come now, you young chaps, this has gone far enough," said one of them. "Give yourselves up."

"And be murdered, not much!" replied Dick.

"Every one will be let off without punishment but the leaders," said the principal.

"Meaning who?" said Jack.

"Yourself, Thompson, Burns, Bassett and Dixon."

"What has Dixon done? He isn't responsible for this strike."

"Yes, he is!" shouted Batt, from behind the door.

Before another word could be exchanged the drenched cook, who had made good her retreat to the kitchen, appeared, wringing her hands.

"They've stolen the dinner! They've stolen the dinner!" she cried.

"What do you mean, Bridget?" asked the Rev. Mr. White.

"The mate, and praties, and puddin', and bread have been stolen by thim imp's," she explained.

The principal rushed into the kitchen to verify this astounding intelligence.

He was as mad as a hornet when he came out.

"All shall suffer!" he cried. "No one will be let off. Capture them, officers!" he shouted.

"Hold on there!" cried Jack. "If you try to take us we'll pi every case in the office."

To prove that he was in earnest a lower-case of the newspaper type was carried to the sill of one of the windows and inclined outward.

The reverend gentleman was paralyzed at the audacity of the rebels.

He halted the officers and had a talk with them.

The result of this was that the reverend gentleman announced that forgiveness would be extended to everybody but Jack, Dick, Bert, Steve and Billy.

The first two were to be rigorously proceeded against, Bert was to be placed on a bread-and-water diet for three days, while Steve and Billy, being regarded as very useful adjuncts to the

printing office, were to work two hours overtime each night for a week.

The Rev. Mr. White regarded this as very good on his part, but he meant to get square with his whole bunch in other ways later on.

"Let's give in," said one of the forgiven ones.

Bert heard this suggestion with indignation.

"If you give in, Jack and Dick will be flogged unmercifully and other things done to them. Are you going to sacrifice your leaders?" he cried.

"What's the use of trying to hold out any longer? We can't stand off the police. I'm through."

The speaker went to the middle window, pushed it up and jumped out.

Like a drove of sheep, the ones who believed they were safe from punishment followed him as fast as they could, to the great satisfaction of the reverend gentleman and his backers, who saw that the backbone of the strike was broken.

It was the old story of the mob deserting its leaders.

"The cowards!" cried Dick. "I've a great mind to punch some of them before they get out."

"Don't," said Jack. "Let them go."

"In a few minutes we'll be up against it hard."

"Maybe not. It's getting dark. While these chaps are making their exit by the window, let us five escape by the passage door, get over the fence and skip."

His proposition was adopted by the condemned five.

When the last boy got out of the window the police advanced and looked into the printing office.

The five who were to be taken in charge had disappeared.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE ROAD.

"Well, fellows," said Jack, after he and his four companions had scaled the side fence and dropped into the field beyond in the gathering gloom, "we shall be missed and pursued in a few minutes; it behooves us, then, to give the school a wide berth as soon as we can. The best place for us to make for is yonder woods. We shall be safe there."

"We may be seen crossing this field," said Dick.

"That's a chance we've got to take. Come on."

They hustled across the field as fast as they could go and reached the edge of the woods.

There they paused and looked back to see whether they were pursued.

They stood there several minutes, but nothing happened, so they disappeared among the trees.

Now that the excitement was over, reflection set in and the question which presented itself to each was what they were going to do.

"If I go home I'll be sent back," said Jack. "My stepfather and myself have no sympathy in common. He has full control over my mother, and does about as he pleases. My mother made the mistake of her life when she married Mr. Shackley. All he had to do, as the saying is, was to step into our house and hang up his hat. My father left everything to my mother, believing that eventually it would pass on to me. It is my opinion that Mr. Shackley will see to it that should my mother die he will come into the property that rightfully belongs to me, though he might make a will, in that case, leaving it to me when he shuffles off, but as he is pretty healthy, that is not likely to happen for a long time."

"I'm no better off than you are, as you know, Jack," said Dick. "Matters are reversed in my case. It was my father who married a second wife with a daughter about my age, and my stepmother has full control of my governor. She has an eye to the windward for her daughter's interests, and hopes to do me out of the bulk of my father's property. She doesn't want me around the house, so if I go home, with my story of how I have been treated at the academy, she'll see that I am sent back to face the music."

"I needn't tell you how I'm fixed, for you and Dick know," said Bert to Jack. "My guardian and the Rev. Mr. White are personal friends, so I should be bundled back to the school in short order."

Steve and Billy had no tale of home woes to tell.

They had each been expelled from two schools for being too gay, and their parents, people in moderate circumstances, residing at Stockton, had sent them to the academy as a last resort.

If they went home they would either be sent back or put to work.

Jack's home was in San Jose, Dick's at Gilroy, further south, while Bert might be said to have no home except his guard-ian's place at Sacramento.

"Well, fellows, I'm going to 'Frisco," said Jack, "and I'd like company."

"I'm with you," said Dick.

"I shall stick by you if you'll let me," said Bert.

The three boys did not dream at that moment how momentous their decision was, and how it would affect their future.

Steve and Billy wanted to go to San Francisco, too, but were afraid to risk it.

Without money or acquaintances in the metropolis of the coast they were of the opinion that they would fare much worse than if they went home.

When their consultation came to an end the boys started on through the woods.

Night had fallen, but the sky was bright with stars, and the weather was balmy.

"I'll bet the Rev. White has had his hired men out looking for us along the road toward town and away from it," said Jack, "but as long as pursuit hasn't come in this direction we needn't worry."

"It wouldn't have done any good if the men had followed us here, they couldn't have captured us," said Dick. "We could easily have avoided them among the trees in the growing darkness."

"Where do you suppose this route will take us?" asked Bert.

"To the road that runs to Yardley, on the Sacramento River," said Steve.

"How far is that?" asked Dick.

"Quite a few miles, probably twenty-five."

"We don't want to go that way," said Jack. "That's taking us away from our destination. The most direct route we can take is to follow the railroad to Niles, and then north to Oakland."

"That's all of a sixty-mile walk," said Steve. "You'll get to 'Frisco much quicker by going to the river. If you're spry you may catch the Sacramento boat which puts in at Yardley about four to-morrow afternoon."

"What's the good of us catching the boat? We haven't any money to pay our way to the city."

"You might be able to make the rifle somehow."

"The chances are against us getting a free trip to 'Frisco."

"The mate might let you work your way. That's how I'd go if I was going to the bay," said Steve. "Walking sixty miles of railroad ties is no fool work. It would take you three or four days. Then the Rev. White knows that you and Dick would be likely to take that route to reach San Jose and Gilroy, and he might telegraph to Niles for the railroad agent there to capture you. Now, if you go over to the river you'll throw the reverend gent entirely off the scent."

"You two are going back to Stockton, then?"

"Yes."

"Going to stick to the railroad?"

"We'll go parallel with it, but not near enough to be seen by any one on the lookout for us."

A few minutes afterward they reached the road which would take them in a somewhat roundabout way to the Sacramento River.

This road ran to Edanville in the other direction.

To reach the railroad the boys would, of course, have to go to the vicinity of the town, which was practically retracing their steps towards the academy.

"What's the matter with us cutting across the country to Oakland instead of taking either the railroad or the river?" said Jack. "An air-line route is always the shortest."

"Sure it is, if you don't get lost in the mountains, and don't mind rough travel and aren't afraid of the rattlesnakes. You don't want to take any such route, take my word for it. You go on to the river. It's the longest way around, but it might be the shortest way in the end," said Steve.

"I think Steve's suggestion is the best we can adopt," said Dick. "I move we go on to Yardley."

"All right; Yardley it is," said Jack.

"Then, good-by, fellows!" said Steve. "Billy and me are off for the railroad. We hope to get a ride on the freight part of the way. At any rate, we expect to be home some time to-morrow."

The five boys shook hands all around and divided into two parties—Jack, Dick and Bert taking the road toward the north, with a long tramp before them, while Steve and Billy started off in the opposite direction.

Jack and his companions trudged along the silent and lonely road.

"Where are we going to find a place to sleep?" said Dick, at length. "We can't walk all night, you know."

"I wish I could tell you, but I'm as much at sea as you are yourself," replied Jack. "The country around here is new to me. We shall probably meet with a farmhouse, but whether the owner will let us sleep in an out-house or not is rather doubtful. He'd naturally want to know who we are, and why we are tramping the road at night. We can't tell him the truth, for that would be to risk putting the Rev. White on our track. The safest way will be to steer clear of a farmhouse to-night and rough it as best we can."

They walked on for an hour or more and then they saw a ramshackle building standing close to the road.

"Here's our sleeping quarters," said Jack.

"I'm tired enough to drop," said Dick. "I could go to sleep now on the soft side of a plank."

"I didn't know that a plank had a soft side," laughed Jack, as they approached the building. "This house appears to be deserted and looks as if it is falling to pieces by degrees."

"If it should fall to pieces all at once while we're in it it would be no joke, I can tell you," said Dick.

"Not for us it wouldn't."

The door stood wide open on a single crazy hinge, and they entered, Jack striking a match to see what the interior looked like.

It looked the wreck it was—a big room bereft of half its flooring, which appeared to have been torn up at times to furnish fuel for fires lighted by tramps who took temporary possession of it for a night on their way.

The gray ashes of successive fires lay scattered on the earth in the middle of the room.

A door led to a smaller and even more ruinous room beyond, and a flight of rude stairs communicated with a half-story above.

As the prospects on the ground floor were most unsatisfactory, the boys went up the stairs.

Here they found a lot of loose straw lying around.

Some of it was bunched in the form of beds, which indicated the use it had been put to.

"This place is pretty decent alongside of the rooms downstairs," said Jack. "We'll shake up this straw, make three fresh bunks and turn in."

This they did, and throwing themselves on them, Dick and Bert were soon asleep.

Jack, though as tired as they, could not get asleep for some reason he could not explain.

He tossed around from one side to the other, envying his two companions the slumber they were enjoying.

The stars shone here and there through the broken roof, winking at him in a knowing way as much as to say, "I see you there, my lad, though millions of miles off."

Suddenly he heard sounds of rough voices in the road.

Some men were coming that way.

Instead of passing by they entered the building, and he heard them talking below.

He peered down through a chink in the floor just as one of the men struck a light.

The fellow flashed it around the room and then ignited the tobacco in his pipe, at which he puffed till it glowed like a live coal.

Jack saw there were three men below, rough-looking fellows, and he wondered if they had stopped at the building to roost, too, in which event he might expect to see them tumbling up the stairs presently.

The men, however, seemed in no hurry to go to rest, if such was their ultimate intention.

After a short desultory talk, one of them went outside and returned with an armful of dry brush and twigs, which he flung down on top of the ashes.

A plank or two were then wrenched up, smashed into small pieces and added to the fire as it blazed up.

More wood was added from time to time, and then the fire was allowed to burn down to a mass of hot ashes.

Into this hot-bed a lot of potatoes were inserted and left to cook.

The men stood around the smoldering fire smoking and talking.

The tenor of their conversation attracted Jack's attention.

He learned that they contemplated robbing the home of a well-to-do farmer who lived in that neighborhood.

They intended to break into the house about midnight, and get away with such money and valuables as they could lay their hands on.

By the time they had completed their plans one of the men announced that the potatoes were ready to be eaten.

Each rascal produced some bread and meat from his pocket, together with a flask of whisky and proceeded to make a meal. After they had cleaned up the food they relighted their pipes and smoked for an hour, talking on various subjects. "It's time for us to make a start," said the leader of the scamps. "Come on."

The three filed out at the door and took the road to the north.

CHAPTER V.

A TURN OF GOOD FORTUNE AND THE REVERSE.

"I'll have to wake up Dick and Bert, tell them about those men and their purpose and then we must follow them and save the farmer from being cleaned out," said Jack to himself.

He lost no time in arousing his companions.

"What's the matter?" asked Dick, sleepily.

"Wake up and I'll tell you," replied Jack.

In a few moments Dick and Bert were listening to his story.

"So they're going to rob a farmhouse near by?" said Dick.

"Yes, and it's up to us to prevent them doing it," said Jack.

"It seems to me we're only looking for trouble."

"Pooh! We're going to perform a good action."

"We're liable to get hurt. Suppose those men are armed? They probably won't hesitate to shoot at us if we interfere with them."

"Look here, Dick, if you don't want to take a hand, don't. I'll go on alone, or with Bert," said Jack.

"Oh, if you mean business, I won't back out. I'll go wherever you go."

"And you, Bert?" asked Jack.

"I'm always with you," replied Bert, in his customary quiet way.

"Then let's start, for we have no time to lose."

"Where is the farmhouse?" asked Dick.

"A short distance on the road we're following."

The three boys left the building and took to the road.

In about a quarter of an hour they saw a large farmhouse standing a little distance back from the turnpike.

A lane led up to it.

"This must be the place," said Jack, opening the gate.

The boys made their way to the house just as a window was thrown open on the second floor and a woman, sticking out her head, began to scream for help.

Her cries were doubtless intended to arouse the hired men who slept in an out-house.

She was quickly seized and dragged away from the window, and her cries ceased.

"Come on, fellows!" cried Jack. "We're just in time."

The boys saw that a lower window had been forced and stood open.

This was a way the rascals had got into the house.

"We must each get a weapon of some kind or we won't be able to do much," said Dick.

They looked about the yard, but there appeared to be nothing lying around there.

"Pick up a couple of those stones. They're better than nothing," said Jack.

Stuffing a stone in each of their outside pockets they entered the house through the window.

They found themselves in the kitchen.

Jack opened the door of a closet and saw a mop.

"Take this, Bert. Here's a rolling-pin for you, Dick," he said.

He took up a long-handled coal shovel himself.

Thus equipped, they entered a passage that connected with the front hall and then started upstairs.

The door of the front room was ajar and a light shone through the crack.

Jack, who was in advance, peered through and saw a lamp on a center table.

Two men were ransacking the bureau drawers.

He pushed the door open and dashed at the men.

They heard the rush of the three boys and sprang around. Jack whacked one of them on the head with the shovel, and Bert shoved the mop in the other's face.

Dick finished the same chap with a blow from the rolling-pin, stretching him senseless on the floor.

The other man drew a revolver and fired at Jack.

The boy was so close that the flash half blinded him, while the bullet tore the skin from the lobe of his ear.

Bert brought the mop down on the rascal's head and he dropped the revolver.

Then Dick seized him around the chest and tripped him up on the floor.

The other two jumped on him.

At that moment the third man, who had been searching a back room, attracted by the racket, rushed on the scene.

When he saw how things were going he concluded it was time to save himself, for he took the boys for three hired hands, and he felt he alone would stand little show against them.

He was satisfied if he could get away with the plunder he had in his pockets.

So he made tracks for the open window in the kitchen, leaving his pals to their fate.

The boys secured the second rascal by tying his hands behind his back with a handkerchief.

"Go and look for the other fellow," said Jack, handing Dick the revolver.

Dick and Bert proceeded to do so, while Jack went to the bed in the room, where the farmer and his wife lay bound and gagged, and released them.

"You and your companions came just in time," said the farmer. "You are all strangers to me. Where did you come from?"

"We were traveling along the road to-night and I overheard the three rascals planning to rob your place. We decided that it was our duty to try and save you from being robbed, and I guess we have succeeded," replied Jack.

"I am under great obligations to you and shan't forget to reward you for your timely aid," said the farmer.

At that point Dick and Bert re-entered the room and reported that they could find no trace of the other man.

"I guess he skipped out when he heard the noise in this room," said Dick.

"Well, we've got two of them, at any rate," said the farmer. "I'll have to get some rope and tie them so they can't get away."

He found a piece of line in the kitchen and the two rascals were tied tight.

With the help of the boys they were carried into the barn and further secured to a couple of uprights.

"They'll be safe there for the rest of the night. Where were you boys going? To the village a mile beyond here?" asked the farmer.

"We were bound for Yardley," replied Jack.

"Why, that's all of thirty miles by the most direct route. You didn't intend traveling at night, did you?"

"No. We were roosting in a deserted building down the road a little way when those men came in there and I overheard their scheme to rob you," said Jack.

"How does it happen you lads are tramping it? You look like respectable boys not accustomed to such a thing."

"We've run away from the Edenvale School because we were badly treated there. I am telling you this in confidence, and with the understanding that you won't send word to the Rev. White that you've seen us," said Jack.

"I am sorry to hear that you thought it necessary to run away from your school, though I can't say that I think much of that establishment from all I've heard about it. I certainly won't make any trouble for you. That would be a poor return for the service you have rendered me. Well, you must stay at the house for the rest of the night, have breakfast with us in the morning and then I'll save you further tramping by carrying you in my light wagon to Yardley in time to get the Sacramento boat if you wish to take it."

"We'd like to take it, but we haven't got any money to pay our fare."

"I will furnish you with money enough to reach your homes. Where do you live? In San Francisco?"

"No. I live in San Jose. Bert, here, lives in Sacramento, and Dick in Gilroy. The three of us are going to Frisco, where we intend to stay awhile until we decide on our future movements."

"I should think you ought to go home," said the farmer.

"We have first-class reasons for not going to our homes. I have a stepfather who dislikes me; Dick has a stepmother who is trying to cheat him out of the property that should be his if his father dies, while Bert has a guardian who is trying to make matters hard for him. We are comrades in hard luck all around."

"I regret to hear it. But we will continue our talk in the morning."

He took them back to the house, showed them into two spare rooms and left them to finish the night under the bed-clothes of real beds, which they found ever so much more

comfortable than the straw of the deserted building down the road.

On examining his rooms the farmer found that he had lost about \$50 worth of property which had been carried off by the rascal who made his escape.

That was small alongside what he would have lost but for the opportune arrival of the boys.

After breakfast in the morning the farmer put a fast young horse to his light wagon, loaded the two prisoners in the back part, with Dick and Bert to watch them, and with Jack beside him on the seat drove to the village, where he reported the attempted robbery and turned the prisoners over to the constable.

Jack wrote out a statement of the conversation he had overheard between the men in the deserted building, proving they intended to rob the farmer's house, signed it before the justice and swore to its truthfulness.

The farmer then drove on to Yardley, where they arrived about two o'clock.

He presented Jack with \$50 in gold, and told him and his companions that any time they came near his house again he hoped they would call and see him.

Then after treating them to dinner at a restaurant he bade them good-by and started back home.

"We're in luck, fellows," said Jack. "We can take the boat in style and have money enough left on our arrival in 'Frisco to pay our expenses for awhile. Those three rascals proved a regular windfall to us. Steve and Billy have nothing on us now. After all, we did the right thing in taking Steve's advice."

"Bet your life!" said Dick. "Fifty dollars will put us on Easy street until we strike a job, for, of course, we'll have to go to work."

The boys walked around Yardley till the boat came in, when they went aboard of her and were soon on the way down the river.

In a short time the boat entered Suisun Bay and about dark stopped at Benicia on the Straits.

The boys had supper on board, which they enjoyed hugely. "I wonder what the push had at the school to-night?" grinned Jack.

"Let me see," said Jack. "This is Wednesday. We always got doughnuts and molasses on Wednesday and Saturday nights for supper as the piece de resistance," meaning the chief dish on the bill-of-fare.

"That's right," nodded Dick. "This meal is a whole lot better than anything the Rev. White ever served us."

"It ought to be, for it will cost four bits apiece—that's \$1.50 out of the \$50."

"Oh, well, what's the odds? It's worth it. I suppose we'll have to put up at a cheap hotel to-night, for we'll get in late, about half-past nine or ten."

"Yes, but we must find a boarding-house to-morrow before we do anything else."

After finishing supper the boys went forward on the lower deck, which was pretty well filled with freight.

By that time the boat had struck San Pablo Bay.

Finally she rounded Pedro Point, turning to the left, with San Francisco about twenty miles away.

The boat reached her wharf a little late that night, and the boys stepped on shore in the van of the rest of the passengers.

In those days, when there was only a one-rail route to Sacramento, the roundabout one via Niles, over which all transcontinental trains then passed, the travel by boat down the river was heavier than it is to-day, or has been for many years.

There were a score of hacks in waiting, but the boys did not propose to patronize one.

Jack had been in San Francisco before, but had no general knowledge of the city.

It was easy to walk straight up to Kearny street, by way of Washington or Clay.

Instead of following either of those streets, Jack carried his companions into Pacific street, which showed that the boy got his bearings a bit twisted.

Now, the lower part of Pacific street in those days, whatever it is to-day, was a mighty tough locality to pass through, particularly at night.

It was ill-lighted, rather narrow, and lined with saloons, sailors' boarding-houses, slop-shops, marine stores of a low grade, possessing altogether a slummy look.

The three well-dressed boys attracted considerable notice, and it was attention that they didn't like.

However, they were getting on all right until they came abreast of a certain low groggery.

It was the headquarters of a well-known crimp, or a man who made it his business to ship sailors, by fair means or foul, that came within his reach.

In the prosecution of his business he stood in with the proprietors of many of the houses along the upper end of Kearny street and others scattered along the Barbary Coast.

Just now the supply of victims happened to be short and he had orders unfilled on his hands.

The crimp in question was standing outside his door talking with a couple of his heelers.

The moment his eyes lighted on the boys something prompted him to size their athletic figures up as fair game for him.

They were not sailors, it is true, but that didn't matter in an emergency.

Drugged and rigged out with slop clothes, they might be passed off as ordinary young seamen.

The captain of the vessel wouldn't discover the cheat till he was out at sea, and then it would be too late for him to protest.

The only thing he could do, then, was to put them to work learning the ropes, and make the best of a bad bargain.

The crimp had worked that game more than once before and profited by it.

He tipped the wink to his heelers, and the three boys were suddenly seized and run into the saloon before they realized what they were up against.

CHAPTER VI.

HARD LUCK.

As they were dragged back to a rear room the boys began a struggle and vigorous protest against the rough handling they were receiving.

"Shut up, young feller," said the crimp, who had hold of Jack. "We've taken a fancy to you and we're goin' to provide for you."

The boys, realizing the seriousness of their situation, called loudly for help, and put up the best resistance they could.

But they had no show, for other hangers-on joined in and they were forced into the back premises, where the rascals threatened to hit them with slung-shots if they didn't keep quiet.

The crimp brought in three glasses of doctored whisky and they were told to drink it.

The boys refused to touch it.

Thereupon they were again seized, their mouths forced open and the liquor poured down their throats, at the risk of choking them.

The drug soon got in its fine work and they went off into a sleep.

They were then searched and the bulk of the \$50 found on Jack was appropriated by the crimp.

They were stripped of their good clothes, which were afterwards sold to a man next door, and dressed in rough togs that fitted them none too well.

Then they were left to themselves till about midnight, when a hack was brought to the door and they were put in it, the crimp going along with a heeler on the box beside the driver.

The vehicle was driven down to one of the wharves where a number of whitehall boats were on hire.

Boatmen were to be found at all hours hanging around the neighborhood, and the crimp engaged one who frequently helped him in his dirty work.

The three boys were removed from the hack to the boat.

The boat was rowed out some distance in the stream to a dirty-looking bark that was ready to put to sea with the next flood tide then making.

The lads were hoisted over the side by the crimp and his heeler.

"They look kind of green," said the first mate, examining the boys by the light of a lantern.

"They're all right and the best I could get you at short notice. Take 'em or leave 'em," said the crimp.

"I must see the cap'n," said the mate. "What do you ship them as?"

"Ord'nary jacks, of course. They ain't A. B.'s, but they know the ropes well enough."

The mate reported to the skipper and that personage made his appearance and looked the boys over.

"Do you call those boys sailors?" cried the captain.

"If they ain't you can call me a liar," said the crimp.

The skipper had his doubts, but as he was anxious to get

to sea that morning he agreed to take the three boys on the crimp's terms, for if he didn't take them he would be obliged to sail short-handed.

"Where's their dunnage?" he asked, meaning their clothes-bag.

"You'll have to fit 'em out and charge it ag'in 'em," said the crimp, with a leer, as he pocketed his money—the advance which each sailor received on shipping.

So the boys were not only sent aloft against their will and knowledge, but were robbed as well.

Two hours later a tug came alongside, hitched on and pulled the bark out to "The Heads" and over the bar.

Sail was then made by the watch on deck and the vessel was headed towards the Farallone Islands, about twenty-five miles away.

When the boys came to their senses, hours later, the bark was out of sight of the California coast.

Their bewilderment was intense when they found themselves at sea.

"We've been shanghaied," cried Dick, who had read considerable about that disreputable practice. "We're up against it for fair."

There wasn't any doubt about that, as they soon found out. The captain was mad when he discovered they were really greenhorns.

He declared he would get the worth of his money out of them somehow, so he ordered them to be fitted out and put into the watches—Jack and Bert in the first mate's and Dick in the second mate's.

That settled their fate, and they were forced to turn to and do their duty with the rest of the crew.

For the first time in their lives the boys learned what real hardship was.

The petty tyranny of the Rev. Mr. White's academy was a mere flea bite in comparison.

It was a kick here and a blow there to "freshen their way," until they felt like jumping overboard.

The first rough sea made them deathly sick for two days, during which time they wouldn't have cared if they had been flung overboard, where at least their misery would have had an end, in this world at least.

Hardly had they acquired what the sailors call their sea legs than the bark ran into a howling gale that drifted them miles and miles out of their course, and finally landed the vessel a wreck on the coast of Ecuador, South America.

It was a barren and deserted stretch of land, under the shadow of the Andes.

On the other hand was the Pacific, beating upon the shore. The wreck of the bark lay on her beam ends, broken in the middle, and pretty well demolished forward.

Her stern, as far as the break of the after deck, was about the only part of her that had escaped destruction.

Not a human being but the apparently lifeless forms of Jack and Dick was in sight—lying stretched on the shore.

How they, the least important part of the vessel's company, happened to survive was one of those mysteries which is understood only by an all-wise Providence.

Jack was the first to realize that he was still in the land of the living.

He sat up, looked around and saw the agitated waves, the desolate shore, and the far-off mountain range.

The sight was not an inspiring one.

"Good heavens! am I the only survivor?" he groaned.

Then he saw something rise from behind a piece of broken spar, and his eyes rested on Dick.

"Dick, is that you?" he asked.

"It's me all right. Where are we at?"

"I've no more idea than a cat. Where's Bert?"

"I'll never tell you. We seem to be the only ones lucky enough to reach the shore. It was sure an awful storm."

"Poor Bert, can it really be that he is drowned?"

"I don't see a sign of him anywhere. Gee, but it's hot! Let's crawl under the shade of the wreck."

It was small wonder that Dick thought it was unusually hot, for they were only three degrees below the equator.

They had been ashore less than half an hour and the sun had only been out a matter of ten minutes, yet their garments were practically dry.

Jack was also sensible of the heat, and followed Dick under the shelter of the stern of the wreck.

Jack thought a whole lot of Bert, and he felt sad to think that he was lost with the rest of the bark's company.

"It's been a short and unfortunate cruise," he said, gloomily.

"That's right," admitted Dick. "It began with hard luck to us, and it's ended with worse to all hands."

"I wouldn't care so much if Bert were alive. We led a dog's life of it on board the bark. The officers used us for punching-bags, while the sailors handled us without gloves because we didn't belong to their class."

The shadow of the wreck was thrown sharply upon the land.

At that moment Jack saw another shadow—a human being—rise above the bulwark line and stand there motionless.

"Hello!" he exclaimed. "There's somebody aboard the wreck. We're not the only ones alive after all."

He jumped up and ran out from under the tilted stern to see who the other survivor was.

Looking up he saw a form clinging to the deck railing on the raised side, with his back toward him.

"Hello-o-o!" shouted Jack.

The figure turned around and looked in the direction of the hail.

Jack uttered a cry of joy, for he recognized Bert Dixon.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BOYS FIND FOOD.

"It's Bert! He's alive!" said Jack to Dick.

"You don't mean it!" cried his companion, springing up and joining him.

Dick speedily saw that Jack had made no mistake about it, for there was Bert sliding down to the lower rail, over which he dropped and landed on the sand.

"I'm awfully glad to see you chaps," Bert said, his face shining with an eager light. "I thought I was the only one who had escaped a watery grave. It was a terrible feeling to figure that one was wholly alone on this desolate-looking shore."

Jack and Dick each grasped him by a hand and told him how delighted they were to find he was alive and kicking, like themselves.

"You must have come ashore on the wreck itself," said Jack.

"I did," replied Bert. "A big wave dashed me into the cabin passage and swept me into the cabin. My head struck something hard there, the leg of a chair, or the table, probably, and I remember nothing more till I recovered my senses, and found the bark at rest, on her port beam, and the sun shining down through the companion-stairs. It was a truly remarkable change from my last recollection of the vessel tossing about at the mercy of the wind and the sea, and I could hardly realize that I wasn't dreaming. I soon found I was not, and then the conviction struck me that the bark had gone ashore somewhere. I left the cabin as soon as I could, mounting the stairs to the deck. From there I had a good look at the prospect about as well as the condition of the bark herself. My heart sank when I saw nothing but the tumbling sea on one side and the inhospitable shore on the other, with not a sign of life anywhere in sight. You can't imagine how I felt as I clung to the rail and looked about me. Then I heard your shout, and I turned and saw you, Jack. I was so overjoyed to find that I was not alone that I nearly lost my grasp on the rail. To know that we three, companions in hard luck, are together again, makes me feel that life still has something in it for us, after all."

"I hope so," returned Jack, "but the prospect just now is not very inviting. We have been saved from the sea, it is true, but where are we? How far from civilization? Is this place a big island, or the coast of South America? The Galapagos Islands near the equator and 200 odd miles off the northwest part of Peru are big ones."

"Oh, we're not so far south as Peru," said Jack. "When the storm hit us four days ago we were hundreds of miles from the northern coast of South America."

"Well, we've gone ashore somewhere, that's as plain as the nose on one's face," said Jack, "and there's land in sight as far as we can see up and down the shore. It doesn't strike me that we're on an island. Look at that big range of mountains yonder. It runs clear out of sight in either direction. Take my word for it, we've been carried by the wind and sea upon the South American coast."

"If we have, then those are the Andes Mountains," said Dick. "They run for thousands of miles up and down the west coast of South America."

The boys speculated for some time as to their actual whereabouts, and then their thoughts reverted to a most important matter—they were hungry; there wasn't a house in sight, nor

any indication of human life. How were they to exist under such conditions?

"Oh, I guess we'll find something to eat aboard the wreck," said Jack.

"The galley is gone. How can we cook any food if we find it?" said Dick.

"That's easy. Build a fire on the shore."

"But if we have no cooking utensils we won't be able to do much."

"Oh, we'll get along somehow, don't you worry. Come on, we'll go aboard and see what we can discover. I daresay we shall find something in the pantry off the cabin passage."

The shipwrecked three found no great difficulty in making their way to the pantry.

There they found everything in the place in confusion.

The floor was littered with the contents of the shelves.

An inspection of the miscellaneous assortment yielded pots of preserved meats and cans of vegetables, jars of jellies, bottles of preserved fruits, some of which were broken, and many other things.

Several smoked hams inclosed in tight coverings swung from hooks in the ceiling, and there were opened boxes containing wine, whisky, preserved jars of ginger, besides flour, sugar, coffee, potatoes and other articles.

"I guess we won't go hungry," said Jack. "There's quite a supply of food on hand."

"There ought to be a lot more in the lazaretto under the cabin," said Dick. "One of the crew told me that was where the bark's stores were kept."

"So much the better," replied Jack.

"But you don't expect to hang around this wreck do you?" said Bert.

"Of course not. But we'll probably need a good supply of food to last us on our road to the nearest town, for we can't count on making rapid progress in this hot latitude."

"The more food we load ourselves down with the slower will be our journey. By the way, how about fresh water?" said Dick.

The boys were making a meal off potted meat and crackers while they were talking, and Dick was the first to feel thirsty.

"I don't know," said Jack. "I suppose all the water-casks have been washed away. There were a couple lashed to the side of the galley, but they're gone, I know. We might be able to find a water barrel in what is left of the hold forward, but it will be only a chance."

"But, in the meanwhile, we've got to drink."

"There's a case of California white wine which is about as light as wine comes. We might manage to do with that till we find water."

"I suppose we'll have to make it do."

"There's the steward's fancy water-keg in the corner. Perhaps there's some water left in that," said Bert.

Dick, being nearest to the keg in question, laid hold of it. He found it quite heavy, and judged that it was full.

It was what was called a 10-gallon keg.

"There's water in it and lots of it," said Dick, picking up a cup within his reach and turning the brass cock.

"Another problem solved," said Jack. "We're doing pretty well under the circumstances."

The boys agreed that they were, and were now quite cheerful and hopeful.

"If we reach a town all right we'll be better off than had we been obliged to continue our voyage to Sydney," said Dick. "That would have been a long trip, and judging from the experience we have gone through I guess we would have been mighty sick of sea-life by the time we reached Australia."

"That's my opinion," said Jack. "We thought we were badly used at the academy, but, gracious! that was a paradise alongside the life we led on this bark."

"Our persecutors have all gone to get their reward, so we have it on all of them now," said Bert.

"That's a whole lot of satisfaction to me," said Dick. "I hope the chief mate is roasting in Hades. He nearly broke my jaw the morning the gale started in. I never met such a brute before. Such men ought not to be officers of ships, or in any position that gives them unlimited authority over people working under them."

As soon as they had finished their meal, which was a hearty one, for they had eaten very little for the past three days, everybody on board the bark having been compelled to go on short commons, since it was out of the question to light a fire in the galley while the storm was at its height, Jack suggested that they straighten up the contents of the pantry and make an inventory of what they had here.

"Oh, we've lots of time to do that. I don't feel like working at present. I want to lie down in the shade and go to sleep," said Dick.

"Go and lie down, then; Bert and I will attend to the matter," said Jack.

"Why don't you wait till later on and let me help?"

"No time like the present," replied Jack, starting in on the job.

Bert gave him a hand, and Dick, feeling that he could not drop out, joined in, though with manifest reluctance.

The pantry was soon cleaned up and the various pots, jars and tins duly sorted and piled up against the inclined wall.

"Now we'll go and take a siesta," said Jack.

"That's Spanish for forty winks, ain't it?" grinned Dick.

"It's Spanish for a nap in the daytime, as I understand it."

"Say, it's a good thing you understand the language pretty well, for it's generally spoken in South America, I believe. You'll be able to pow-wow with a native when we run across one. When a fellow who can only speak his native tongue finds himself in a foreign land he realizes he is at a great disadvantage when it comes to the necessity of making himself understood," said Dick.

"I'm quite a linguist, for I understand French as well as I do Spanish," said Jack.

"Is that so? I didn't know that before. However, you won't need any French in these diggings. Your Spanish, however, will come in first-rate."

The boys took refuge under the lee of the wreck, which furnished the only shade near by, but though out of the sun it was roasting hot and sleep was almost out of the question at first.

After awhile the heat produced the contrary effect and they dozed off, perspiring at every pore.

They did not wake up till late in the afternoon.

The few garments they had on were wringing wet.

Dick was the first to open his eyes.

"Oh my, this is fierce!" he ejaculated. "I'm parboiled. I'm going in the water if I can find a safe spot to bathe."

He got out of his trousers and walked down to the edge of the still ruffled Pacific.

The waves rushed in and receded with such force that he did not dare trust more than his lower limbs in the swash for fear of the undertow carrying him away.

He walked along the shore a short distance till he came to a basin protected by a circle of rocks.

Here the water was deep enough for a limited swim.

"Gee, but this is fine!" said Dick, diving in.

He splashed around in the shade of the rocks, delighted beyond measure.

"This is the first time I've felt really good to-day. I must put Jack and Bert wise to this," he added.

Finally he crawled on the rocks and looked in the direction of the wreck.

He saw Jack and Bert standing up looking toward the shore.

They had seen his clothes on awakening and judged he was in bathing, but at what spot they couldn't make out.

"I hope he hasn't been so reckless as to trust himself in the surf," said Jack. "The undertow would make short work of him."

"He doesn't appear to be in sight," said Bert, anxiously.

At that moment a distant shout arrested their attention.

"There he is over on the rocks," said Jack. "I guess he's struck a safe spot. Come on, Bert."

They walked over to the basin.

"Peel off and come on in. The water's fine," said Dick.

His companions lost no time in following his example, and the three enjoyed the time of their lives for nearly an hour.

By that time the sun was low in the west, painting a glittering golden pathway across the heaving ocean.

They returned to the wreck, made another meal and got down on the sand again.

Darkness came on with the setting sun, with no intervening twilight, but it was not really dork, for the sky glittered with myriads of stars, and objects were visible at a considerable distance.

The boys talked about the future, planning a trip along the shore in search of a town or village where they could get in touch with civilization, until they grew sleepy and fell into a dreamless slumber.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE INN ON THE ROAD.

The boys hung around the wreck for two days, making their preparations for a start.

They made up three good-sized bundles of provisions, which included a bottle of water each.

Jack suggested that they bury the rest of the eatables, as well as the cases of wine and brandy.

"We may have to come back this way, and then we'll need the food."

"Do you expect the wreck will go to pieces?" asked Dick.

"No, but a bunch of tramping natives of the country might come this way after we are gone and clean the wreck out."

So the remaining contents of the pantry was made a cache of in a large opening of the rocks around the basin.

"We can only travel during the darkness," said Jack, "for the sun is too hot for us in the daytime. So if it's all the same to you chaps we'll start out in the course of an hour."

No objection was offered to this suggestion, and in due time they turned their backs on the wreck and set their faces toward the north.

After jogging along for a couple of hours they found further progress along the shore blocked by a long stretch of rocks extending down into the sea.

They were obliged to strike into the interior over a rough and rocky way.

Finally they hit a place where tramping was a little better.

This path indicated that travel sometimes came that way.

It took them into a hilly section, away from the sea and towards morning they entered a wood.

As this place promised shelter from the sun, Jack called a halt, for they were tired of the first stage of their tramp and, laying down their packs, they turned in for a sleep.

They did not wake up till the middle of the afternoon.

They partook of the first meal of the day, drank sparingly of the water, since that was their most precious possession, and they had but a limited quantity with them.

They resumed their journey under the trees, going slowly.

They halted at intervals and finally darkness came on again. About nine o'clock they ate again and then resumed their way.

The woods was an extensive one for there seemed to be no end to it.

They were still in it when morning came and they lay down again to sleep.

They awoke late in the afternoon, took dinner and started on again.

"Say, isn't it about time we got out of this wood?" asked Dick.

"How should I know?" asked Jack. "Do you take me for an animated guide-book of this part of the country?"

"I merely asked the question."

"Well, as I never was here before I can't answer your remark. It may take us a week to pass through it, or we may make our exit from it in half an hour."

"I hope it will be in half an hour. I feel lost in this place. Maybe we are lost. We may tramp on till our food gives out, and then we'll starve to death. Perhaps we'd better turn back and go in the other direction."

"Don't get discouraged so soon. The longest lane has a turning, and this wood is sure to have its limit."

"We may be no better off then."

"We can't help that."

Shortly after darkness fell they emerged from the wood and found themselves on a mountain road.

"This must lead somewhere," said Jack. "Step out. Perhaps we shall soon strike a house or a village."

"I hope so," said Dick.

Half an hour later when they rounded a great rocky spur they saw a light before them, shining from the window of a house beside the road.

"Hooray! We've hit something at last!" said Dick, in a tone of satisfaction.

They hurried forward, believing that the worst of their journey was behind them.

As they drew near the house they saw it bore a swinging sign above the door.

"I believe it's a mountain inn," said Jack.

"So much the better," returned Dick. "There wouldn't be an inn unless there was travel to support it. That means we must be on the road to a town. Luck seems turning our way at last."

They marched up to the door of the house which bore the swinging sign, indicating its inn-like character, and Jack knocked.

In a few minutes the door was opened by an uncommonly pretty girl, in a short, bright-colored gown, who asked, in Spanish, what the senor wanted.

"Is this an inn?" Jack asked, in Spanish.

"Si, senor," she answered, after a momentary hesitation. "How far is it to the nearest town?"

"How far? Does not the senor know?" she asked, in some surprise.

"No, senorita, or I wouldn't have asked for the information."

"But you must have come from Dolores."

"No, senorita, we have just come through the woods from the coast."

"From the coast! Is it possible? There is no town in that direction for more than thirty miles."

"We were shipwrecked, senorita, and are on our way to the nearest town or village."

"Shipwrecked!" she exclaimed, in some astonishment.

"Yes, senorita. We are strangers to this land. Are we in Peru?"

"In Peru? Why, no, this is Ecuador."

"Then we are further north than we supposed. But you haven't answered my question about the nearest town. Is it Dolores, which you just mentioned?"

"Si, senor."

"And is it far along this road?"

Before she could reply a man, with a rascally looking face, came up behind her.

"Who are you talking to, Pepita?" he said, roughly.

"Three boys who wish to find their way to Dolores."

Pushing her aside the man framed himself in the doorway. He took the boys in as well as he could under the starlit sky.

"Will the young men walk in and make themselves at home?" he said.

"We have no money to pay for entertainment," said Jack. "All we wish to know is how far is it to the next town?"

"No money! It is true, then, that you have been shipwrecked."

"Quite true, senor."

"Then you are welcome to the hospitality of my poor inn for the night without charge. In the morning I will myself see you to Dolores, as I am going there on business."

Had Jack been acquainted with the character of the innkeeper he would not have thought of passing even a single night under his roof, but as the man was a complete stranger to him he had no means of guessing what was behind the seemingly gracious invitation.

Yet he did not fancy the looks of the man much, for unless his face greatly belied him, he hardly looked like a person to be trusted.

Still, as he and his companion had nothing about them to lose, he concluded that it would be better to accept the invitation than to pass the night out of doors.

So telling his companions to follow, he stepped into a fair-sized room, where a table was spread in readiness for the meal an old woman, of unfavorable looks, was cooking on an open fire.

The innkeeper pointed at a bench as a sign for the boys to be seated.

The room was lighted by the lamp which stood on the window ledge.

This was the light which had guided the young Americans to the house.

The old woman turned around and looked at them curiously.

Then she beckoned the man over and said something to him in a low tone.

The innkeeper nodded and came back to Jack, whom he plied with questions about the wreck and its location; also who they were and where they came from, as well as many other queries.

The girl, who was helping the old woman in her culinary operations, showed considerable interest in Jack and his companions.

The innkeeper, observing her curiosity, stamped his foot in a savage way and gave her a look which caused her to withdraw her notice.

Presently two other men entered the room from the rear.

They appeared to be surprised at seeing the boys, but made no remark.

The old woman announced that supper was ready, whereupon the innkeeper told the boys to sit up and make themselves at home.

Jack translated the invitation to his friends, and as the stew which had been dished up from the pot smelled inviting they were glad to accept.

The places that were intended for the old woman and the girl were given to Jack and Dick, and room made for Bert.

The girl passed around slices of buttered bread, and the repast was topped off with coffee.

The innkeeper himself nanded around the latter.

The girl moved around the room like a person on pins and needles, as the expression is.

"Will the senor have another piece of bread?" she said, as Jack was lifting the cup to his lips.

As she offered the bread she hit the cup in an awkward way, upsetting it, with a crash, on the floor.

The innkeeper sprang up with an imprecation, and said something fiercely in French.

Jack understood it and it aroused his suspicions.

When the innkeeper got him a fresh cup of the coffee the boy saw him drop something in the cup.

"The rascal is up to some villainy," thought Jack. "I believe he intends to drug me."

Fearing that the coffee served to his companions had been dosed, he was about to warn them not to touch it when he saw that he was too late, for both Dick and Bert had drained their cups.

"The young senor will pardon the awkwardness of my daughter," said the innkeeper, setting the fresh cup before him.

"Certainly," said Jack, who happened to be seated next to him.

Seeing that the innkeeper had not yet touched his own coffee an idea flashed through the boy's head.

He saw the girl standing back in the corner regarding him with a look of apprehension.

"Your daughter is making signs to you, senor," he said.

The innkeeper, who was in the act of reseating himself, rose again with another imprecation and made a rush for the girl.

She fled with a scream through the rear curtained door.

This drew general attention away from the table, and Jack took instant advantage of it to deftly exchange cups with his host.

The innkeeper did not pursue the girl, but said something in French to her from the door, after which he returned to the table and seated himself.

He went on with his supper.

"You are not drinking your coffee, senor," he said, with furtive impatience. "Is it not to your liking?"

"It is very good, indeed," replied Jack, raising the cup to his lips and drinking it off.

The innkeeper watched him with covert satisfaction.

Then he drank the drugged coffee himself without the least suspicion that he had fallen into his own trap.

CHAPTER IX.

JACK SAVES PEPITA'S LIFE.

All hands got up and the old woman sat down herself.

The innkeeper called the girl and she slowly made her appearance in fear and trembling.

He pointed at the table and she sat down without looking at Jack.

Dick yawned sleepily, while Bert looked fishy about the eyes.

"The young senors had better retire," said the innkeeper, blandly. "I will take you upstairs to a room where you will sleep soundly until the morning."

Taking a small lamp off a shelf, he lighted it and motioned the boys to follow him.

Jack saw signs pass between him and the other two men who were standing near the window, lazily smoking cigarettes.

Dick and Bert were both eager to lie down on any kind of a bed, for they could hardly keep their eyes open, but Jack was wide awake as he had ever been in his life.

As the three rascals had knives stuck in their waist sashes, and looked wicked enough to use them without much provocation, and his companions appeared to be fast yielding to the drug administered to them in their coffee, Jack hardly knew what to do, since he alone could not hope to cope against the scoundrels.

He knew that Pepita had tried to save him, and really had succeeded in doing so, so far as the drug was concerned, and he believed she would lend him further aid if it were within her power, but the prospects looked pretty blue.

He could not understand what object the innkeeper had in doing them up, since they had nothing of value in their possession.

It was clear he had some purpose in the background, or he wouldn't act as he was doing.

Jack's only hope lay in the fact that the innkeeper had drugged himself, and would not be able to take part in his contemplated rascality.

The boys were led to a room containing four rude beds.

"You do not need a light, senors," said the innkeeper. "The moon is just rising and will presently shine in through that window," pointing at an open one.

"All right," responded Jack, anxious to get rid of the fellow. "We'll be in bed and asleep in five minutes. We're pretty well played out," and he yawned as if dead tired, while his companions, kicking off their shoes, dropped heavily on a bed each and were asleep almost immediately.

The innkeeper grinned in a sly way, nodded and left the room, closing the door after him.

Jack heard his feet on the stair as he went down.

He walked to the door and found that it had neither lock, bolt or catch to it.

The only way to prevent it from being opened was to barricade it from the inside, but the beds and a couple of stools, all the furniture the room contained, was not very well adapted for that purpose.

It was evident from the open window, through which Jack saw that escape could easily be made, that the innkeeper had full confidence in the drug he supposed had been administered to the three.

Opening the door, after removing his shoes, Jack crept softly downstairs and peered through the folds of the curtain into the main room.

The old woman and the girl were finishing their supper at the table.

The innkeeper and his two associates were standing close to the curtain, talking together in low tones in French.

They were thoroughly conversant with that language, and Jack blessed his stars that he had acquired a fair knowledge of it.

In a few minutes he learned the purpose that the innkeeper had in view.

It was to carry the boys into the interior and sell them to the overseer of a copper mine, within the depths of which they would be compelled to slave without the least chance of escape.

Jack did not fully realize the awful fate that would be theirs if once they were sent down into the mine, but judged that it would be tough enough.

"Go and get the mules ready," said the innkeeper. "They are all asleep by this time and the sooner we start the better, for it will take all night to make the journey through the mountains."

Jack slipped to one side when he saw the two rascals start for the curtain, through which they had to pass on their way to the rear.

They did not notice him in the darkness, and when their footsteps died away outside Jack returned to the curtain.

The innkeeper was lighting a long, native cigar at the fire. He turned around and berated Pepita for what he called attempted treachery on her part.

She denied that she had intentionally upset the coffee in Jack's hand.

The innkeeper, however, was not convinced of her innocence, and threatened to make short work of her if she ever did such a thing again.

Jack was satisfied the girl was not the villain's daughter, and he wondered why she remained with him, unless it was because she was afraid to run away.

The innkeeper began to yawn and rub his eyes, whereat he muttered some unintelligible expressions, and looked fiercer than ever.

Finally he dropped into a chair at the table and the old woman asked him what was the matter.

"Sacre! I know not. I feel very queer," he returned, half in French and half in Spanish.

"You look sleepy. You didn't make a mistake in the coffee, did you?" said the woman.

"By gar!" he hissed fiercely, trying to rise, "I made no mistake, but something is the matter."

Then he glared fiercely at Pepita.

"Traitor! I believe you have had a hand in this. You have drugged me, and I will have your life!"

Making a desperate effort, he rose to his feet and, drawing his knife, reached for the girl.

She sprang up with a scream and tried to escape him, but he lurched forward and caught her by the arm.

Jack darted into the room and caught his arm with one hand and smashed him full in the face with the other.

The innkeeper went down, like a log, and lay motionless on the floor.

Jack picked up the knife and told the old woman if she opened her mouth it would be the worse for her.

"Ah, senor, you have saved my life," said Pepita, seizing the boy's hand and pressing it to her lips. "You did not drink the coffee?" she added.

"Why, yes, I drank the second cup after making an exchange with that rascal."

"I see! I see! How smart you are!" she cried, admiringly. "My two friends are drugged upstairs. How are we to escape?"

"I know not. Pedro and Gonzales are to be reckoned with." At that moment there came a pounding on the door, and a shout of "Open," in Spanish.

The old woman, with an agility remarkable for her years, darted to the door and opened it.

Four dark-skinned, rascally men entered.

The old woman spoke to them rapidly, pointing at the boy. They drew their knives and advanced upon him.

"You are lost, senor!" cried Pepita, cowering to one side.

Jack faced the bunch with resolute mein and the knife, determined to sell his life dearly.

But he was saved from a scrap by the sudden entrance of Pedro and Gonzales through the curtain.

They were astonished to see Jack in an attitude of defense when they supposed he was asleep with his companions upstairs.

However, they lost no time in seizing and disarming him. "Francois, he is dead!" cried Pedro, looking down at the innkeeper.

"No, no," replied the old woman, "he is drugged!"

"Drugged! How is that?" asked the rascal, in astonishment.

"The senor tricked him somehow," she answered.

"Never mind. We have the young senor safe enough. He shall not escape us."

A general explanation took place with the newcomers, who appeared to be a part of the gang who made the inn their headquarters.

The fate selected for the three boys was approved by the others, and as Pedro declared no time was to be lost, Jack was dragged outside and strapped to the back of a mule.

Then the unconscious Dick and Bert were brought downstairs and tied on the other two mules.

Pedro and Gonzales then started the animals ahead of them up into the mountains.

During the confusion Pepita, who knew what she had to expect when Francois recovered his senses, disappeared from the inn.

CHAPTER X.

PEPITA SAVES JACK AND HIS FRIENDS.

It was a long ride through the night that Jack was forced to endure, and which his friends were blissfully unconscious of.

When morning dawned they were still many miles from their destination, in a wild and desolate part of the mountains.

Finally Pedro called a halt for the rest, and the mules, with their burdens, were tethered by the roadside.

The two rascals took a covered basket from the back of one of the animals, sat down by a rock, and taking a bottle of wine and some meat and bread from the basket started to eat their breakfast.

The bushes, a short distance away, were cautiously parted and a face appeared.

It was the pretty countenance of Pepita.

She had followed the outfit all the way from the inn in spite of the hardship it entailed upon her.

She had made up her mind to save Jack, even at the risk of her life, for she felt she owed him her life, and her warm young Spanish heart was now devoted to his interests.

She well understood the fate designed for him and his companions, and she resolved to save him at least from going to the copper mine.

In her hand she carried a glittering knife, and she felt no hesitation to use it in Jack's behalf if the necessity arose.

Her dress and shoes were torn by the rocks and brambles she had passed over and through in her toilsome journey.

Her hands and neck were scratched and bleeding, but she was pluck to the backbone.

Jack, lying partly along the side of the mule, faced in the direction of the bushes, and he was astonished beyond measure when he recognized Pepita's face.

That she should have followed the party such a long and toilsome trip seemed beyond his comprehension.

Her presence, however, was undoubted, and his heart began to gather hope, for he knew from her movements that she was there to help him and his friends if she could.

"She has done this because I saved her life," he thought, "but what can she, a girl, do against those two rascals?"

At that moment sounds reached his ears from further up the road.

The tramp of animals and the shouting of men, evidently urging them on.

Pedro and Gonzales heard the sounds, too, but did not trouble themselves to get up.

They knew what was coming—a train of mules bearing a load of copper on its way to the seaport village of Dolores, fifteen miles to the north of the roadside inn.

Presently the head of the train came in sight, winding out of the mouth of a ravine.

The mules were urged forward with shouts and blows, which they accepted with a stoical indifference born of long experience.

When the train got abreast of the spot where Pedro and Gonzales were those rascals got up and went forward to meet the men in charge.

The train came to a stop and a pow-wow took place.

Pedro and his companion explained that they were taking three boys to the mine to be sold as workers.

Several of the mule-tenders came over and looked at the boys.

"Stout chaps. They'll do first-rate. The overseer will be glad to get them for we are short-handed in the mine, owing to several deaths," said the leader of the convoy.

In a few minutes the train proceeded on again.

When the rear mules came up Pedro and Gonzales recognized a particular friend and walked on about a hundred feet talking with him.

Pepita seized the chance to sneak out of the bushes and glide up to the mule on the back of which Jack was a prisoner.

"Senor, I have come to save you," she said, hastily cutting his bonds with her knife.

In a few moments he slipped to the ground, free.

"Fly and hide yourself!" she urged, pulling him toward the bushes.

"No, Pepita, I can't desert my friends," he said.

"But they are drugged and can't help themselves. Quick, or you are lost."

"At least I can cut them free. Give me the knife."

"There is no time. Pedro and Gonzales have stopped and will turn back in a moment. Ah, senor, for my sake!" she pleaded. "Think what I have risked for your sake! Hide and perhaps we will find a chance to save your friends yet."

Jack allowed himself to be persuaded, and followed her into the bushes.

Hardly had they disappeared when the men turned around and came back.

Pedro's sharp eyes missed the form of Jack from the mule. He uttered an exclamation of consternation and surprise.

"What's the trouble?" asked Gonzales.

"One of the boys has escaped. We must recapture him. He can't be far away."

"Escaped! Caramba! Let us search."

They whipped out their knives and started into the bushes. Suddenly Pedro uttered a cry.

"Caramba! I have been hurt," and he fell to the ground, with an ugly gash in his leg which had been inflicted by a broken branch he scraped against.

Gonzales stopped.

"Injured!" he exclaimed, bending over the writhing Pedro.

"Si, in the leg. I believe that boy has a knife. Look out that you don't catch it yourself. He is hiding somewhere here, like a snake in the grass. Por Dios! I am done for as to walking further."

As Gonzales bent down to lift his companion a stone, launched by Jack, caught him squarely on the head and he fell down, stunned.

Pedro uttered a volley of imprecations.

Having temporarily put their enemies out of business, Jack and Pepita emerged from the shelter of the bushes into the road.

"We will unloose the mules and drive them forward," said Pepita, "and make our escape."

"That will take us further into the mountains and away

from the coast," said Jack. "We must retrace our way along the road."

"No," said the girl. "We would have to pass the inn."

"What's the odds? It will take us nearly all day to get that far, and we can hide till it's dark and then slip past the place."

"We can go over the mountains further on, and by following the sun, get around to Dolores, but we shall go hungry till the morning," she said.

"Never mind that. Our lives are more important than our stomachs," said Jack.

Pepita spied the basket and looking into it said:

"Here is food and wine that will answer very well," and grabbed it up.

Jack freed the mules and started them on, after helping the girl upon the back of the one he had so lately been tied to. In a short time they had left the precious pair of rascals well behind.

They followed the road for an hour before Pepita, pointing to a ravine on the left, said they must turn off there.

Jack headed the forward mule into it and the other two followed, as a matter of course.

They had covered perhaps a mile of uneven ground when Jack noticed a movement from Dick.

He halted the little train and getting the knife from Pepita cut Dick loose from the mule's back.

Dick looked around in wonder.

"Hello! Where am I at?" he said, as he straightened up.

"So you've woke up at last. I'm mighty glad of it," said Jack.

"I say, what does this mean? I thought we went to sleep in a room of an inn."

"So you and Bert did, but I didn't. You two were drugged by the coffee you drank."

"Drugged!" exclaimed Dick, astonished.

"Yes," answered Jack, who, in a few words, explained matters to his friend.

"Gee! And where are we now?"

"Somewhere in the Andes."

"And that's the girl we saw at the inn?"

"Yes, her name is Pepita. We owe our escape from a terrible fate to her."

The girl had, during the trip so far, told Jack enough about the copper mine to make him sensible of the fortunate escape he and his friends had had through the pluck and gratitude of Pepita.

"She's a brick, then. How came she to stand in with us?"

Jack told him how he had saved the girl's life.

"Gee, but you had a great nerve, old man!"

The voice of Bert drew their attention to him.

He had recovered his senses and was both surprised and alarmed to find himself bound on the back of an animal.

He was at once released and made acquainted with all the facts.

"How are we going to reach the coast this way?" asked Dick.

"Pepita seems to know the way we are following," said Jack.

"What are we going to do for something to eat along the route?"

"We've got a small supply of food, but we'll have to go easy with it. Are you hungry now?"

"Yes, I could eat a square meal without any trouble."

"Then we'll take a bite all around, with a drink of wine."

A small portion of the food was handed out to each, after which each took a drink from the bottle.

As each mule carried a bundle of fodder for its own consumption the animals were fed and then the journey was resumed.

Pepita proved to be a bad guide, for it wasn't long before they found themselves all tangled up in the mountain range.

Finally they came up against a blank wall of rock that appeared to be a regular cul de sac.

"We're stuck here for fair," said Dick. "We'll have to turn around and go back till we can find a place to branch off. If we don't get out of this wilderness we are likely to leave our bones here."

"That would be hard luck," said Jack.

He started to turn the mule he was leading, on the back of which Pepita rode, when the animal, backing accidentally into a mass of tall, thick bushes, slipped and disappeared.

Pepita uttered a scream as she vanished, too.

"Good heavens!" gasped Jack, parting the bushes carefully and looking ahead.

He found himself looking into a narrow, cleft-like opening in the rock, the interior of which was as black as ink.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HIDDEN VALLEY.

"Madre mio! Save me, Senor Jack!" he heard Pepita crying from the depths of this tunnel.

"Wait for me, fellows. I'm going after Pepita," said Jack.

"Look out for yourself!" cried Dick, warningly. "You may fall into a hole."

"Where are you, Pepita?" called Jack, as he pushed forward in the dark.

"Here, Senor Jack!" came from a short distance.

She appeared to be less alarmed than at first, for the mule had stopped backing and she knew that Jack, in whom she had all confidence, was coming to her aid.

It only took Jack a minute to reach her and he seized her by the arm in the dark to reassure her.

"This is a funny hole in the wall," he said. "I wonder where it leads to?"

"Let us get out at once," she said.

"Hold on a moment. I wish I had a match."

"I have some in my pocket," she said.

"Good! Hand them over," he said.

He struck one and looked around the tunnel.

He saw that it led off sharply to the left, and that the mule had backed up against the end wall of the passage.

Jack's curiosity was aroused and he determined to see where the cross tunnel led to.

"You won't mind waiting in the dark till I come back, Pepita," he said.

"Where are you going?" she asked.

"There's a second passage behind you and I'm going to find out, if I can, where it runs to."

"You might fall into a rift in the rocks," she said, anxiously.

"Not while I've matches to light my way," he replied.

He started ahead and found that the cross tunnel inclined down like the other.

The floor was comparatively smooth, though it was littered with many small stones.

As he went on he saw that it wound around in a gentle curve.

There were no pitfalls anywhere, and he rather marveled at this peculiar piece of Nature's handiwork, and wondered how it had been formed.

He did not reach the right conclusion until many years later when he read a learned paper on the subject of underground streams, and then he understood that at some period many years, perhaps a thousand or more, before the time he made the discovery of the intersecting tunnels or passages in the mountainside a heavy and rapid-flowing mountain stream had flowed into the cul de sac and burrowed out a passage for itself through the combined earth and rock and had flowed through the tunnels until its source had either gradually dried up or been in some way diverted from its original course.

Jack went on for some distance till he began to wonder if he was descending into the bowels of the Andes, and then he suddenly came into a lighted cave.

Looking out of the opening he gazed upon one of the most wonderful valleys his mind could conceive when considering that the mountain scenery he had heretofore met with since leaving the wreck was all of the most desolate and sterile character.

This valley was like a veritable Eden.

The grass was soft and green, flowers grew in profusion, and trees sprang up in all directions.

That some of the trees bore fruit he had evidence close by. The whole valley was surrounded by the great spurs of the Andes, rising in serried battalions toward the sky.

The place resembled nothing so much as a vast natural amphitheater.

The temperature was hot, owing to its enclosed character and exposure to the direct rays of the tropical sun, which at that moment hung almost directly overhead.

Taken all in all it was a strikingly beautiful scene, and Jack was in no hurry to retrace his steps through the dark tunnels that connected it with the cul de sac above.

The fruit attracted him, for he was hungry.

He climbed the nearest tree and found it contained the most luscious figs he had ever eaten.

He had always believed that the figs grown in Santa Clara Valley, near his home in San Jose, could not be surpassed, but he had to take off his hat to these.

He ate several and then not only filled his pockets with them to carry back to his friends, but also his hat.

Finally he re-entered the cave and looked around there. To his surprise he saw a large chest standing against the wall and near by was a rifle.

Beside the rifle were two revolvers in holsters.

There was also a small, black, three-legged pot with a handle and several tin pans, such as miners used in washing surface dirt for gold.

Jack appropriated the revolvers and strapped them around his waist, then, full of his discoveries, he started back up the winding incline.

He went up much faster than he came down, for he knew the way was clear and that no offshoots were there to lead him astray.

Presently he heard voices ahead, which he recognized as Dick's and Pepita's.

The former was fruitlessly hurling questions in English at the girl and she was talking back to him in Spanish.

Neither understood the other, but both were somewhat excited over Jack's continued absence.

"Hello!" said Jack, coming up to them and the mule. "What are you trying to do, Dick?"

Pepita uttered a little shriek of joy on hearing Jack's voice, while Dick said:

"Where in thunder have you been, old man?"

"Where I'm going to take the bunch of you. See if you can turn the mule around into this cross-tunnel without breaking his neck," said Jack, striking a match.

The feat was accomplished, but not without difficulty.

"Now then, Dick, return to the entrance and lead down your mule, and tell Bert to follow with his. Hurry up. Hold on a moment. Are you hungry?"

"I'm nearly starved."

"Hold out both your hands for some of the finest figs you ever tasted."

"Figs!" exclaimed Dick. "You're joking."

"Taste one and see if I am. Here, Pepita, I've got some figs for you," he added, in Spanish.

He handed her half a dozen.

"Gee, but these are fine!" cried Dick. "Where did you get them?"

"Never mind. We're all going right to the tree they grow on. Hurry back to Bert, and don't eat all the figs like pigs, but save a few for our comrade outside."

Dick started off and in a few minutes returned at a slow pace, leading his mule, with Bert and his mule behind.

"Now, then, follow me, fellows. The way is clear, so you needn't be afraid if it is as dark as the caves of Erebus, which, according to mythological history, were as black as the ace of spades."

Jack led the way and his friends followed close on the sound of the footfalls of his mule, which echoed through the passages.

Dick and Bert were wondering where the tunnels were going to end when the party emerged into the lighted cave.

Jack lifted Pepita down, and her heart thrilled as he held her momentarily in his arms.

Already she was head over heels in love with the young American senior, who had saved her life, and had she dared she would have thrown her arms around his neck and kissed him more than once.

"Come and see the beautiful valley," said Dick to his friends, leading the girl to the entrance of the cave.

They left the mules standing in the cave, and were delightfully surprised by the fertile valley the moment their eyes rested on it.

"There's the fig tree," said Jack, pointing at it.

Then the sight of the grass reminded him that the mules were entitled to some consideration, so he brought them out, and the animals began an eager feast.

"What do you think of this hidden valley?" asked Jack.

"It's a dandy," said Dick.

"I daresay there are other exits from it, but if there are not we can return quite safely by the route we came. Before we leave it we'll load the mules with enough food, and a supply of grass for themselves, to last us for a week while trying to find our way out of the mountain range."

"We can take our time here," said Dick, "as long as there is plenty to eat."

"You'd soon get tired of a fruit diet and nothing else, so would we all. It is better than no diet at all, though."

"How about water?" asked Dick.

"Where have the mules gone?" said Bert at that juncture.

"Blessed if I know, but we mustn't lose them. Come on, let's hunt them up," said Jack.

The mules were found drinking at a rippling mountain stream.

The young people joined them and also drank their fill.

"That's ever so much better than the wine," said Bert.

"Bet your life it is!" said Dick.

The sun was so hot that they were glad to beat a retreat to the cool cave, where Jack pointed out the chest, the rifle, and other things.

"There must be somebody hanging out here," said Dick.

The key stood in the lock of the chest, and Dick took the liberty of opening it to see what it contained.

It held clothes and many other things.

There were several books printed in English, so the boys judged that the owner of the chest was either an American or an Englishman.

Jack, who had had no sleep all night, and Pepita, who had also been awake, began to feel the effect of their long spell of wakefulness.

They lay down and went right off to sleep, leaving Dick and Bert to do likewise if they chose.

They slept till aroused by Dick, about dark.

"Listen," said Dick. "There's evidence that we are not alone in this valley."

Jack listened.

Through the calm evening air came the strident barking of more than one dog.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WILD MAN AND HIS DOGS.

As the barking of the dogs came from one spot all the time the boys guessed there was a house in the valley, or perhaps several houses, for that matter.

It was impossible for them to make out just what was in the valley beyond the trees and vegetation that they saw on every side.

"We'll take a ride around the place in the morning," said Jack, "and if there are inhabitants here we'll introduce ourselves."

They made their evening meal on a small part of the remaining meat and bread, with the figs to fill up on.

Sitting at the mouth of the cave they talked for an hour or so and then turned in for a sleep inside.

Jack was the first to awake and he made a further examination of the immediate vicinity of the cave.

He not only discovered more fig trees, but other fruit of a tropical nature.

He brought all he could carry to the cave, and all hands had some of it for breakfast.

"Now we'll make a start to explore the valley," said Jack. "I guess I'll take that flask of whisky that I saw in the chest. It might come in handy."

Will took possession of the Remington rifle and put a handful of cartridges in his pocket.

As there were but three mules for the four of them, one would have to walk, so the boys decided to take turns afoot.

Jack said he'd do the first spell of walking, and started off beside Pepita.

Dick and Bert followed after on the two mules.

It was decided to circle the edge of the valley first, and this they did.

They met with no evidences of human beings at any point, nor did they find any means of exit from the valley other than the underground way by which they had got there.

"This is certainly a hidden valley," said Jack. "We only got into it by the merest accident. No one would have thought there was an opening behind those bushes in the cul de sac. If the mule hadn't butted into it we never would have learned there was a luxurious place like this close at hand, in the midst of the Andes. It will be something for us to talk about when we get back to California."

"And when we get back to our homes we'll be sent to school again," said Dick.

"Well, what's the difference? We've discovered that there are worse things in the world than the Rev. White's academy. Just the same, I shall put up a stiff kick against returning there. There are lots of other schools where a fellow can get an education without being forced to work half the time for the benefit of the head of the establishment. I guess my mother didn't know the kind of school it was, and I'm pretty certain that the letter I sent her telling what I was up against were suppressed by the reverend principal, so she never got an idea of the truth."

"I guess your stepfather knew the character of the school all right," said Dick, "and sent you there on purpose to make

you hoe a hard row. I am satisfied that my stepmother selected the school for me for the same reason."

"Well, as it goes against my grain to let my stepfather get the better of me, like he has my mother, if I decide to return home I'll show him that I've grown independent of him since I've been out in the world. Nothing like rubbing up against the rough edges of things to make a man of a fellow. You ought to feel able now to handle your stepmother."

"I don't think she'll be able to order me around as she used to," said Dick.

"Bert has the worst of the deal, as his guardian has complete legal control over him, and all the kicking in the world won't do him any good. I'm afraid that individual intends to skin Bert out of the legacy his mother left him."

"It looks that way," said Dick. "He ought to complain to the judge of the court."

"That's won't do him much good. He'd have to show some proof that his guardian was trying to defraud him. How is he going to do it?"

"I couldn't tell you."

They went completely around the valley and finally got back to the cave.

The heat was so great that they determined to postpone further investigations until the sun went down below the mountain peaks.

They rested in the cave, had dinner, finishing up the last of the bread and meat and filling up on fruit.

The rest of the afternoon was passed in talking and sleeping. Jack woke up about five and found Dick looking over the things in the chest.

"I guess the party who owns this stuff has gone away and left it," said Dick, "otherwise we ought to have seen him around."

"I don't see why he should leave his rifle and revolvers, even if he temporarily abandoned his other property," responded Jack.

"If he's working somewhere around the valley the place isn't so big that he couldn't get back here every night."

"He might be stopping over where we heard the dogs yelping last night."

"Well, let's go over and see."

"All right. We'll leave Bert and Pepita to finish their sleep. We are not likely to be long away."

Mounting a mule each they started for the center of the valley, Dick carrying the rifle as a precaution.

After a short ride they came out in a kind of clearing, the most conspicuous feature of which was a huge rock, rising a matter of a dozen feet and spreading twice that distance to the right and left.

As they approached the rock they saw the form of a man stretched out on the ground, with his head and shoulders supported by a large stone.

"There's our man now," said Jack. "There's something the matter with him."

"Perhaps he's dead," said Dick.

They dismounted and advanced toward the motionless figure. He was a tall, stalwart man well along in years.

His eyes were closed and his face was deathly white.

"He's dead," said Dick.

"No, he isn't. If he was his eyes would be open and his mouth, too," said Jack.

"Well, he's next door to it. Hello! What are those glittering things on that paper beside him? They look like real diamonds."

His exclamation aroused the man and he opened his eyes. "Water—water!" he gasped.

"He wants water and we haven't any with us," said Jack.

"Give him some of that whisky you have in the flask. It doubtless belongs to him," said Dick.

As Jack placed the flask to the old man's lips Dick uttered an ejaculation of alarm.

"Look!" he cried, pointing.

Jack turned and saw a sight that took away his breath—a fierce-looking man about to release two vicious dogs.

Jack released the flask which the old man had seized with both his hands, sprang up and drew one of his revolvers.

Dick, at the same time, grabbed up the rifle and cocked it.

"Aha!" cried the half-clad apparition at the opening of the rock, in Spanish. "More victims for us. At them, good dogs!"

The animals sprang at the boys, looking as if they meant to rend them in bits.

And they were able to do it, too, for they were large and powerful.

Crack! crack!

Jack and Dick fired at the same instant and the dogs fell

and rolled over, one with a rifle ball in its brain, the other badly wounded by a revolver bullet.

The wild-looking man uttered a snarl of rage.

He grabbed a spear standing within reach and flung it straight at Jack.

The boy barely avoided it by springing quickly aside.

As the man reached for a second spear Jack fired at him.

The ball cut a furrow alongside of his head and he dropped unconscious.

The old man appeared to understand what was going on, though he did not see the dogs nor the wild man.

The animal Jack had wounded was tearing around in the grass, frothing at the mouth, and it looked as if he had got his death-blow.

"Keep watch, Dick, and see that nothing more comes at us out of that rock," said Jack, kneeling again beside the old man.

"How are you feeling, sir?" he said.

"Badly," replied the old chap, in a hoarse whisper. "If I live an hour I shall do well. How came you boys to find your way into this hidden valley?"

"By accident. One of our mules backed into the entrance of the tunnel above, and curious to find out where it led to I followed it down to the cave," answered the boy.

"Ah, yes, I see. You have come in time to do me a last service. Have you shot those dogs?"

"Yes."

"And the man, too?"

"Yes. I had to shoot him in self-defense."

"You have done a good job. He is a fiend in human shape, and his dogs were like him. They have done for me, and would have finished me, but their master preferred I should die a lingering death by the heat of the sun. What I have suffered this day no one can guess, nor could I myself tell its subtle torture, but the end is near and I will soon be out of my misery."

"Are you really so bad as that?"

"Yes. What's your name, my lad?"

"Jack Riddle. My companion's name is Dick Thompson. There is another boy with us at the cave named Bert Dixon, and a Spanish girl, Pepita by name. Are those your things in the cave?"

"Yes. And I give them to you lads to take away with you if you can or care to."

"Then it was your rifle that killed one of the dogs; my companion has it. And one of your revolvers with which I laid out the other dog and the man."

"I'm glad to hear it."

"I suppose you got into the valley by accident yourself?"

"I did in a way, but I came here to find this wonderful valley and secure its treasure of diamonds."

"A treasure of diamonds!" exclaimed Jack. "Those beside you are some of them, then?"

"Yes. Listen. The diamonds, which are said to be worth a million dollars, and are all roughly separated from their outer crust by a rude method known to the natives, were brought here from the mines of Brazil and hidden in that cave in the rock out of which came the man and his dogs, who in some way became their guardian and protector. My name is Jeremiah Trundle, and I'm an Englishman. I learned of this valley and the existence of the diamond treasure through a man who tried unsuccessfully to locate the place, and who told me the story on his death-bed. How he learned about it he did not tell me. Indeed, he had but little time to tell me anything, but, nevertheless, I got enough from him to excite a strong desire to take up the hunt where he left off."

The old man paused and took another swallow of the whisky to revive his failing strength.

"I will not tell all I went through trying to find this valley. Enough that I did find it, as my presence here testifies. Then I lost no time in looking for the place where the diamonds were hidden. After several days' search that rock attracted my notice, and I decided I had hit upon the spot. That was yesterday, so you see I have not been here long. Had you preceded me doubtless your lacerated remains would now strew this spot, as I supposed you were unprovided with weapons until you found mine, which I was a fool to leave in the cave, but I fancied the valley was untenanted save by myself."

"Yes, sir, the dogs would have done us up if we were unarmed," admitted Jack.

The old man nodded feebly after taking another drink.

"Late yesterday I was sitting in the grass watching the rock and speculating as to where I should dig," he went on, "when, to my amazement, a part of the rock, in the shape of a door, swung outward, and that human fiend came forth leading two dogs. He started off with them in a direction opposite to

where I was and disappeared. I immediately guessed that the diamonds were inside the rock and I determined to try and secure some, at least, before he got back, or at last satisfy myself that the diamonds were there."

"You entered the rock, then?"

"I did, and found an earthen vessel filled with diamonds similar to those beside me. I exulted at my success, and determined to carry away with me as many as I could, and make a second attempt at another time. But it was not to be. Fate was against me. The man and his dogs returned and caught me. He flew into a terrible rage, cursed me and set the dogs on me. They fastened their fangs in my legs and tore me cruelly. I saw I had no chance against the savage beasts, and looked for a quick death. But that was denied me. He called the dogs off, and left me to suffer in agony all night long. In the morning he set the dogs on me again, but as soon as they had given me another lacerating he called them off. Then he carried me outside and laid me down here. With a malignant laugh he placed those diamonds you see beside me that I might see them in my dying agony. Then followed a day of torture in the sun, and then—you came along."

He paused and appeared to be quite spent.

The dew of death gathered on his forehead, and he began to mutter incoherent words.

Jack tried to take the flask from his fingers to give him another drink, but he clutched it so tightly that the boy was unable to accomplish his object.

By this time the wounded dog had succumbed and was dead near its companion.

Jack stepped up to the savage man and looked at him.

He was seemingly far from being dead.

"Get a rope from the nearest mule," said Jack to Dick. "We must tie him, otherwise when he recovers he is likely to hurt us if we were not watching him closely. In any case, he must be secured so that he cannot prevent us getting at the diamonds."

Dick got the rope and they tied the man, but he looked so powerful that Jack doubted if any ordinary rope would hold him long.

They went back to look at Jeremiah Trundle.

His glazed eye and drooping jaw showed that his troubles were at an end in this world.

He had died without giving a sign.

CHAPTER XIII.

A MILLION IN DIAMONDS.

"Poor fellow, all is over with him," said Jack.

Dick gazed solemnly at the corpse and said nothing.

"Now for the diamonds," said Dick. "Put that bunch of them in your pocket."

Dick did so and followed Jack into the cave.

A flight of stone steps led downward a dozen feet into a cave illuminated by a stone vessel containing an oily substance on which floated a kind of taper.

It was not a bright light, but it answered well enough to make objects visible.

In one corner was the wild man's cot, simply a bed of dried grass.

Nearby was a pile of freshly gathered fruit and a bowl of powdered maize from which he made round cakes, like thin fishballs, a few samples of which stood near it.

There was also a pile of stones, about the size of marbles, with which the man probably amused himself, for their utility was not apparent.

There were other things of no great importance.

In another corner stood the earthen vessel of diamonds.

There was quite a quantity of the stones, all bereft of their outside covering and all looking like gems that would cut to from three carats upward to ten.

They had been roughly polished, just enough to display their brilliancy.

A person with no great knowledge of diamonds would have said this collection was a great find.

"We're in luck," said Jack. "There are diamonds enough here to make us all rich. Bert can let his guardian go bag, and you and I can put on a little style with our folks."

"That's right, old man. Things have evidently come our way at last," nodded Dick.

"Well, lend me a hand and we'll get this vessel of diamonds out of here and over to the mules. We can dump it into the panniers, and take our find to the cave to astonish our two friends there."

They found the vessel hard to lift and awkward to carry, so it was decided to bring the panniers and empty the diamonds into them.

Dick remained on watch while Jack went over to the mules.

The wild man was still unconscious.

In a few minutes Jack returned to the cave with the panniers, the diamonds were scooped into them and then they left the cave with their rich burdens.

After placing the panniers on the mule Dick asked Jack what they were to do with the wild man.

"Nothing. I'll gamble on it he'll get free of his own accord; that rope never will hold him," said Jack.

"Then he's sure to give us trouble. He'll come to the cave and murder us all in our sleep."

"I don't mean to give him the chance. Now that we have secured a big treasure I propose that we leave the valley at once and find our way to Dolores."

Dick agreed that would be the right thing to do.

"Now, we'll carry the old man over here and bury him in that hole in the rocks. After we shove him in we'll fill the mouth of the hole with stone. He will be buried as well as if placed in an expensive tomb," said Jack.

That sad duty was soon finished and then they led the mules toward the cave.

When they got back to the cave they found Bert and Pepita impatiently awaiting them.

"We have a great story to tell you, Bert," said Jack, "but as the sun is almost down it must keep, for we've got to leave the valley right away. We must gather enough fruit to last us twice as long as we expect to be on the road."

"What's the rush?" said Bert. "I wouldn't mind staying here a couple of days more for a rest."

"You'll do your resting somewhere else. It is necessary that we leave."

Perceiving that Jack had some good reason for getting away from the hidden valley, Bert said no more.

The three started in to gather a supply of food.

It was dark by the time all the preparations were made.

Jack took the lead with Pepita, as usual, and the little party started up through the underground water-course to the cul de sac.

Passing out through the bushes they started back over their former route looking for a place to branch off toward Dolores.

During the first part of the trip Dick told Bert, and Jack told Pepita the adventure they had met with in the valley which led to the discovery of a fortune in diamonds.

Of course, they were both astonished and asked many questions on the subject.

"When we reach Dolores you will take a vessel for Guayaquil," said Pepita, in a sorrowful tone.

"Yes. We intend to get away from this country as soon as we can," said Jack.

"And what is to become of me if you desert me, Senor Jack?" she said.

"Desert you—never! You are to come with us, if you will, all the way to California."

"You mean that, Senor Jack?" she said, in a glad tone.

"Certainly I mean it. You are willing to go, aren't you?"

"I will go anywhere with you, Jack. I could not live away from you."

"Do you think so much of me as all that?"

The answer the girl returned showed Jack that Pepita loved him dearer than anything in all the world.

They traveled some distance before they struck a trail that led downward through the range, and they followed it till the sun rose.

Then they stopped, took refuge in a ravine and passed the greater part of the day in sleep.

They resumed their journey about sundown and traveled all night.

Although the cul de sac was but a day and a half's journey in a straight line from Dolores, it took the little party nearly a week to pick their way through the wilds of the lower Andes to the road that circled the inn.

They reached it five or six miles from that hostelry on the way to the seaport village where the copper from the mine was shipped to Guayaquil.

Pepita said there was an inn ahead, but would not advise them to stop there, for though the people who kept it were not anywhere near as bad as Francois of the mountain inn and his associates, yet if they discovered that the party had a fortune in diamonds with them they would never leave the inn alive.

"Then we won't stop there, but camp in the woods this side of it," said Jack.

This they did, and passed the day in sight of the road, but concealed from any one traveling upon it.

"We'll reach Dolores in the morning, Pepita says," Jack told his friends. "By selling the mules we ought to raise enough money to pay our way on some small craft to Guayaquil, which, as I recollect my geography, is situated on a north indentation of the Gulf of Guayaquil."

"I hope so," said Dick, "but how are we going to carry the diamonds so that no one will get on to them?"

"We must put up at the inn in Dolores and carry the panniers to our room, the one you, I and Bert will occupy. Then we must get a number of small bags and fill them with the diamonds, sewing up the ends. Six bags will do, and we will each carry two of them. We'll keep a few loose ones in our pockets to sell at Guayaquil in order to raise funds to carry us back to California."

Jack's plan was considered a good one, and it was duly carried out after they reached the village, which they did on the following morning.

Jack made arrangements for two rooms at the inn, which was a rude kind of a public house, and for meals while they remained at Dolores.

The proprietor told him where he could dispose of the mules, and he lost no time in disposing of them at the best price he could get.

After the midday meal Jack started out to look up a sailing craft, leaving Pepita and his two friends together to put the diamonds in the bags he had procured.

He found several small vessels in the little harbor, but their skippers would not consent to taking passengers at any price.

CHAPTER XIV.

CONCLUSION.

When he told Pepita, she suggested that he speak to the proprietor of the inn.

So Jack looked up the innkeeper and put the matter up to him.

"If you are willing to hire a small boat with the owner and one or two men to take you to Guayaquil I can find you the man," said the innkeeper.

"All right," said Jack. "Send for him."

In the course of an hour the man appeared and was sent up to the rooms where the young people were passing the afternoon.

He was a rascally looking fellow, and neither the boys nor Pepita fancied him a bit.

"What kind of a craft have you?" Jack asked.

"Ah, senor, she is a very fine boat," said the man, twirling his greasy hat in his hands. "You will be much satisfied with her."

"What are you going to charge us for the passage?"

The man hesitated, sized the bunch up and named a figure.

"Too much," said Jack, "unless you wait for part of your money till we reach Guayaquil."

"How much you pay down?"

Jack figured what it would cost to settle their inn bill if they left about dark after supper, and then told him.

"You will pay rest at Guayaquil?"

"Yes," said Jack.

The skipper hesitated and asked for some security.

"I've got a rough diamond," said Jack, fishing one out of his pocket. "You can hold that till you get the rest."

The man's eyes glistened when he looked at it.

"S'pose you give me this, I not ask you any money, eh?" he said.

"Not much. What do you take me for? I could buy two or three boats like yours for that and have money over," he said.

The rascal knew it and looked disappointed.

Jack completed arrangements with him to sail at dark, and the fellow went away.

"I don't like that man," said Pepita. "He is not to be trusted. He will try and steal that diamond if he can."

"If he tries any games on me he'll get a bullet in his body to remember me by," said Jack, resolutely, and he meant it.

After supper Jack settled with the innkeeper and the party boarded the boat.

It had only a single mast, with a big sail, something like a small Italian coasting craft, and was open clear forward to within three feet of the bow.

It was a dirty boat, too, but the young people were prepared to take pot luck.

After they set sail Jack handed the skipper the diamond, or rather another stone of about the same size.

The rascal had sharp eyes and a sharp recollection, and he knew it wasn't the same stone.

"Ah, senor, you have more than one diamond, I see."

"Nonsense! That's the diamond I showed you at the inn." The skipper leered, put it in his pocket and said nothing more.

The night was clear and the stars shone out brilliantly as the sailboat skimmed over the water close in to the coast.

The skipper had a crew of two with him, and they looked as wicked as himself.

The three sat aft, talking together in low tones and watching their passengers, who were huddled together, forward.

The hours went by and the little party dropped off to sleep, with the exception of Jack, who believed, from Pepita's warning, that the skipper was not to be trusted.

It was well he was thus wary, for about three in the morning the skipper, supposing the passengers to be all asleep, started forward with one of his men, intending to do up the entire party, rob them of what they had and pitch their bodies overboard.

"Halt!" cried Jack, starting up. "What do you want over here?"

The skipper was taken aback, but not anticipating any effectual resistance on the part of his victims, he drew his knife and dashed at Jack, the other following.

Jack raised his hand, there was a flash and a report and the skipper fell back.

The other man, with a cry of alarm, started back, lost his balance and pitched sidewise into the sea and disappeared from view.

The man at the helm started up with a cry and moved the tiller to bring the boat around, but Jack covered him with the revolver and ordered him to keep on, which he sullenly did.

The report of the revolver awoke Dick, Bert and Pepita, and Jack explained to them what had happened.

Finding the skipper was wounded, Jack recovered his diamond from his pocket, and leaving Dick on watch took a nap himself.

The boat reached Guayaquil on the following afternoon.

Jack told the other survivor of the boat's company that he would pay him the passage money and he could do what he pleased with it.

This he did, after raising some funds by the sale of two of the diamonds, which fetched him about \$500 in silver, and the fellow, instead of returning to Dolores, started further up the coast, intending to sell the boat at some port where the transaction would not leak out.

Jack secured passage for his party to Panama.

On their arrival they bought a new outfit of clothes all around and then Jack registered them at a hotel to await the sailing of the next steamer for San Francisco.

They were detained about a week, and during that time they lived on the fat of the land and enjoyed themselves immensely.

During that week Jack made the acquaintance of a diamond dealer, and to him he sold a bunch of the gems, receiving \$50,000, which he turned into a draft to take with him to California.

Ten days later the party landed in San Francisco.

Then Jack started to dispose of his diamonds.

A conservative value of his whole stock was one million in gold.

A syndicate of diamond men took the lot at that figure, and the sale attracted so much notice that the newspapers interviewed the boys and printed their story.

The money was equally divided, a quarter of a million apiece, Pepita getting as much as each of the boys.

The boys then went home and made peace with their families.

In the end Pepita combined her fortune with Jack's when they were married, on which happy occasion there was a reunion of the four who came in possession of the treasure of the hidden valley.

Next week's issue will contain "SAM, THE SPECULATOR; OR, PLAYING THE WALL STREET MARKET."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

Some time ago the wife of an assistant State officer gave a party to a lot of old maids of her town. She asked each one to bring a photo of the man who had tried to woo and wed her and had been jilted by her. Each of the old maids brought a photo and they were all pictures of the same man, the host's husband.

While circling in a hydro-aeroplane over the battleships Georgia and Rhode Island in Marblehead harbor the other day, W. Starling Burgess received a signaled invitation to come aboard, and made so nice a landing that he was able to step directly from his place in the machine to the side of the Georgia. After taking tea with the officers he resumed his flight, some of the sailors assisting him in making "the get-away."

Word was received at the Staten Island Cricket and Tennis Club a few days ago that a visit from the Australian team of cricketers, now in England, is assured for this fall, and that a match, to be arranged somewhere about the third week in September, will take place on the grounds of the Staten Island Club, at Livingston. The Australians after playing in New York will return home by way of San Francisco, playing en route both at Philadelphia and St. Louis.

The clanging of a trolley car bell is believed by the police to have scared George Herbrand, a pushcart peddler of coal and wood, forty-four years old, of No. 365 Stagg street, Brooklyn, to death recently. Herbrand had just pushed his cart across Bushwick avenue at Flushing after dodging half a dozen cars, when a trolley slid up behind him and the motorman loudly clanged his gong. With the first stroke of the bell Herbrand dropped the handle of his cart, darted to the sidewalk and fell prostrate. An ambulance surgeon said he had died from apoplexy due to fright.

Charles Mumford, of New York, brought suit the other day for \$12,000 against Howard T. Alexander on an assigned claim held by William Coe. The claim is in the form of a check on the Liberty National Bank, dated September 3, 1910. It is alleged that Coe kept a gambling establishment where Alexander played roulette. The latter lost \$12,000 and gave his check for the amount. When Coe presented the check at the bank for payment he learned that the maker did not have sufficient funds there. Coe then assigned the claim to Mumford, the present plaintiff.

The most powerful poison known is reported to have been extracted by a German chemist recently from the seeds of the dicinus, the familiar castor oil plant, and has been attracting much attention on account of its remarkable properties. Its power is estimated to be so great that a gram—about a thirtieth of an ounce—would kill a million and a half guinea pigs. If adminis-

tered so as to cause severe illness without death, it gives immunity against a larger quantity, and the dose can gradually be increased until more than a thousand times as much can be endured as would kill an untreated animal. Though arsenic, morphine, and other poisons can be taken in larger and larger quantity, nothing approaching this marvellous increase in dose can be borne.

Couples who make love in church are not to be laughed at, and should a youthful gum chewer poke fun at them while the service is in progress he may be ejected by the pastor. Such, in effect, was the ruling of Judge Avery in the District Court the other day, when he discharged the Rev. H. D. Keyes, pastor of the Holbrook Methodist Church, of Quincy, Mass. The minister was summoned to court to answer a charge of assaulting Russel Chapman, twelve years old, who persisted in chewing gum and laughing at a love-making couple at service one Sunday night and was ejected by the pastor. The court held that a clergyman has a right to maintain order in his own church, even if he is obliged to remove disturbers. The decision of Judge Avery was applauded by many of Mr. Keyes's parishioners.

A dispatch has just been received from Tunis saying that the Italian battleship Re Umberto has been driven by a storm on a rock and has sunk at a point near Zuara, on the northwest coast of Tripoli, near the Tunisian border. The shore in that vicinity is dangerous. Several rocks and islets lie to the northward of the mainland, and shoal water with rocky patches extends nearly half a mile off the shore. The battleship Re Umberto, 13,673 tons, completed in 1893, has been engaged in convoying landing expeditions undertaken by Italian troops in Tripoli. She carried a complement of something over 750 men. She was 400 feet long, 77 feet wide and drew 28 feet of water. She had an armament that included four 12-inch guns.

The farmers in Jefferson Co., Pa., are in a state of mind over a discovery which they think may lead to the opening up of a new gold field superior to anything in the Klondike. The Stoops brothers have a farm near Punxsutawney on which is a fine spring, which has supplied water for all farm purposes for the last sixty years. Dr. G. W. Wise, of this town, recently stopped at the Stoops farm. He drank from the spring and noticed that the water was heavily charged with minerals. He took a sample, which he has had analyzed, with the result, he declares, that the water assays \$6 in gold to the gallon. Dr. Wise says he has devised a machine which will extract the gold from the water, and is now having it constructed in Chicago. He has entered into a partnership with the Stoops, by which they are to share in the proceeds. Farmers of the neighborhood are seeking to locate the ledge over which the Stoops water passes and accumulates its gold.

THE "RED BOYS"

OR,

THE YOUNGEST CHAMPIONS OF THE DIAMOND

By H. K. SHACKLEFORD

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER VIII. (Continued)

"Alex Heath and Fred Joline were nearly killed last night by somebody."

"The deuce! How! Where?"

"Under those two big oaks down beyond Buck Hardin's house. Somebody found them there unconscious with their heads broken. The doctors have been working with them ever since three o'clock this morning."

"Well—well! That is news. Who found them?"

"The old colored whitewasher who lives down below the railroad. He was coming home from somewhere out that way and stumbled over them. He says they were nearly fifty yards apart when he found them."

"What explanation do they give?" Phil asked. "Whom do they charge with the crime?"

"Oh, they haven't been able to speak. The doctors say it's an even chance for them ever to speak again."

Just then Harry Martin came in, and greeted Phil cordially.

"What do you think of the attack on Fred and Alex last night?" he asked.

"I don't know what to think," Phil replied. "Mrs. Martin has just finished telling me about it. I noticed that neither of them went up to Albany yesterday. When they come to they can probably tell who did it, or how it happened."

"No doubt, but they are both in a bad way. I met Dr. Smith just now, and he says Fred was hit on the top of the head with some kind of blunt instrument. He thinks the skull is fractured, but is not sure yet."

Phil went over to the post-office, and there heard nothing else talked about but the attempt on the lives of the young men on the night before.

"Mr. Heath has telegraphed to New York for a detective," Phil heard one say to another.

"It ought to be investigated, and the would-be assassin punished as he deserves," remarked another.

Phil got his mail and came away. On the way down the street he said to himself:

"So they were Fred and Alex. Well, I am not sorry. They meant to do me up in the dark so I could not swear to their identity. They got done up themselves and I am unhurt. Hope they'll pull through, though, and give some sort of an explanation. No matter what sort of a story they may tell, my story would be believed, for Buck could swear to the time I left him with that club in my hands. What explanation can they make for being out

there under those two trees after midnight, if not to waylay me? Guess I won't say a word till I hear what they say."

He was met by Buck Hardin.

"Good for you, Phil!" said Buck. "Heaven, but you came near killing 'em!"

"Hush! What do you know about it?" Phil asked, very much astonished.

"I know all about it," said Phil.

"Then keep your mouth shut, for Heaven's sake! I don't want to be arrested. How did you find it out, anyway?"

"Oh, as soon as I heard it I knew you did it. You had a bat, and had to go right under those trees after you left me."

"Well, you didn't say so to anybody, did you?"

"Not a word."

"Well, keep your mouth shut. They were there waiting for me. I didn't know till this morning, though, who they were. That bat saved my life, and I did some good batting with it."

"I should say you did!" and Buck laughed.

The day wore on, and Alex came to at noon.

He said he and Fred were taking a stroll, and were attacked by parties unknown with clubs that looked like baseball bats in the dark. Each was struck down, after which they knew no more.

CHAPTER IX.

"WE'LL WIN! WE'LL WIN!"

The news of the deadly assault on the two young men on the streets of Avon spread far and wide. The Heaths and Jolines were rich families. The fact that both had fat purses and gold watches, neither of which were taken, was evidence that robbery was not the motive of the attack.

Fred Joline did not recover his speech till nearly forty-eight hours after receiving the blow. Then he said he did not know who hit him, nor how many his assailants were.

That was a little different from Alex's story, and the astute detective began to do some thinking over the matter. He got hold of the story of the bad blood between the young captain of the Red Boys' Nine and the two young men, and began investigating on that line.

While the Red Boys were coming home from a practical game one evening, Buck said to Phil:

"They have a detective on that clubbing case, and he questioned me this morning. I am sure he suspects you or both of us, and if we don't manage to have him called off we may be arrested about the time we are ready to start for Albany. That would break up the game."

"How can we have him called off?" asked Phil.

"I don't know. I think, though, that if Mr. Heath knew the truth he would send the detective home rather than have it known how Alex got his head broken."

"I believe you are right," said Phil, after a little pause. "I'll go to Mr. West, Tom's uncle, and tell him the whole story and let him manage it."

Mr. West was a lawyer and politician. Phil told him his story and asked his advice, adding:

"I have no money to pay you, but——"

"I won't charge you anything, my boy," said the lawyer, secretly rejoiced that he had a grip on his most determined opponent in the case. "Just let me manage it for you. Don't mention it to a living soul."

West sent a note to Heath, asking him to call at his office in regard to the clubbing of his son, as he had something to tell him about it.

Of course, Alex's father made haste to see the lawyer. In ten minutes after he met him he knew the truth. He didn't want to believe it, but was soon convinced. He went home and tackled Alex, and he owned up.

"Served you right," he said. "Two grown young men waylay a seventeen-year-old boy to beat him, and get clubbed nearly to death themselves. But for the disgrace of the thing I'd publish the facts to the world."

He paid the detective and sent him away, much to that individual's astonishment. Before he left Avon, however, the detective remarked to the hotel-keeper that he had found out enough to know that Heath and Joline did not care to have the truth known.

Of course that set every tongue in Avon going, and the matter was more talked of than before. thousand people cheered. The girls waved fans and handkerchiefs and Avon was getting ready to go. The girls made such a demand for red roses that, in many instances, natural flowers could not be had. They had to use artificial roses in order to be sure of having the colors of the Nine on that day.

When the Nine marched down the main street to the railroad station, Tom West bore the white silk flag with the huge red rose in the center. The crowd of over a thousand people gathered. The girls waved fans and handkerchiefs and cheered the Red Boys.

Cicely Berkeley and Nannie Joline were again in the party, with a dozen or more wealthy young girls from the summer hotels. Cicely received many compliments on the beauty and design of the flag.

Phil went through the train in search of her, bearing a wreath of red roses. When he found her he placed it on her lap, saying:

"The Red Boys send this to you with a pledge of their best efforts to win the game to-day."

"Oh, thank you ever so much!" she exclaimed. "I shall be ever so glad if you do win."

"They say if you will sit where they can see you with that wreath on your head, or in your hands, they will win sure."

"Oh, my!" and she blushed as red as the roses in the wreath. "If you win, bring the flag up to the grand-stand and let me hang this wreath on the staff."

"Oh, that would be beautiful!" cried all the girls around her.

"I am going to bet all my money on you boys," said a young blonde from one of the summer hotels, "and if I lose I'll cry all the way back home."

"Did you get a return ticket?" Phil asked.

"Yes—we all did."

"Then you can get back safe, anyway. But a girl who cries over her losses should never bet."

The others laughed and guyed the blonde a good deal after that.

The crowd at the ball ground was larger than at the first game. The Grays were confident, and it did not take Harry Martin long to learn that four League men—professionals—had been engaged for the game.

When they entered the enclosure the crowd cheered them to the skies. Everybody seemed to be a friend to the cocky little fellows in red who had so pluckily knocked out the Grays.

"Boys," said Martin, as soon as he had a chance to do so, "they have four new men—old League players—look out and do your best."

The Red Boys were first at the bat, with Joe Smith with the willow. Joe smashed the first ball that came to him, but right center caught him out. That was not very encouraging as a starter.

Tom West took up the willow and let two balls pass him to the catcher. The third one he sent out to left center, bounding like a ricochet shot from a cannon. He broke for base, passed first, and slid to second amid cheers from the crowd.

"Well done, Tom!" said Phil. "There's a little girl up there on the grand-stand who'll give you a kiss if you get home on the next run."

The crowd laughed, and several thousand pairs of eyes were turned to the grand-stand in quest of the little girl. The Avon girls giggled and laughed, and themselves wondered if Phil really meant any particular girl.

Jack Hickey took up the bat and let the first ball pass him.

"Don't let me lose that kiss, Jack!" called Tom from second base, and the crowd cheered.

Swish!

Smash!

Away went the ball straight over second base, and Tom sped for third.

"Hi—hi—hi!" yelled the crowd, as the ball came chasing him.

He made a tremendous slide for the home plate.

"Judgment!" cried Phil, turning to the umpire.

"Safe!" replied the umpire, whereat the Red Boys yelled like Indians.

Tom sprang toward the grand-stand, looking up at a thousand smiling faces.

(To be continued)

FACTS WORTH READING

WOMAN TO WIELD HAMMER.

New York City is to have a woman auctioneer. She is Mrs. Eli Sobel, of No. 16 West 90th street, widow of a well known auctioneer who died recently.

Mrs. Sobel wrote to Mayor Gaynor, saying she had always been closely associated with the work of her husband and believed she was qualified to take up his work if she could get the necessary license. After consulting with his legal adviser, the Mayor decided that there was nothing in the charter to prevent a woman from competing in the auction business with men. As soon as she furnishes the \$2,000 bond and the \$1,000 fee Mrs. Sobel will be sworn in.

BUYS HISTORIC DRYDOCK.

An immense drydock has been recently purchased from the United States Government by James Shewan & Sons and will be installed in Brooklyn. It was towed into the harbor the other day, and now lies at the foot of Fortieth street, South Brooklyn.

The historic drydock will be placed in position at the Shewan shipyard, foot of Twenty-sixth street, within the next two weeks. The drydock was built for the Spanish Government in 1895. It was used by the Spanish warships in Havana Harbor for some time. During the war with Spain the dock was sunk in Havana Harbor, and later seized as a prize of war by the United States.

After the drydock was raised it was towed to Pensacola, where it was used by the United States gunboats at the naval station.

BLIND GIRL ATHLETES.

Field Day was held recently at the Western Pennsylvania Institute for the Blind, and several blind girls took part in foot races, jumping, egg races, three-legged races, and other forms of athletic sports.

The baseball-throwing contest was won by Iva Beighley, who threw 90 feet 9 inches; the 35-yard dash was won by Clara Yochen, time 0:4 3-5, which was two-fifths of a second faster than any former blind girls' race; standing broad jump, won by Majorie Stewart, distance, 7 feet 1½ inches; standing high jump, won by Margaret Smith, height, 3 inches; 50-yard egg race, won by Stella Matthews, time 0:8.

More than 150 blind scholars cheered the events, although the contestants did not know they were winners or losers until notified by the timekeepers. The records will be sent to the Overbrook (Penn.) School to be compared with similar events in the country.

GUARDING RUSSIAN ROYAL FAMILY.

The Dowager Empress of Russia, who arrived at Sandringham the other day, generally travels all the way from Russia in her own special train, which remains at Calais until her return. The train, which is bomb proof, and is most luxuriously fitted up, is placed on a siding and guarded by a special staff. A couple of years ago, when

the Empress paid a visit to her daughter, the Grand Duchess Xenia, at Biarritz, the train was left at Bayonne in charge of Cossacks, whose picturesque dress was a source of much interest to the population.

A curious story is told by the Czar himself of an episode that occurred during his visit to Queen Victoria at Balmoral many years ago. When out one day in Ballochbuie Forest he asked his way of a gillie, who, to his surprise, answered him in Russian. On inquiring what he was doing in the wilds of Scotland the man informed the Czar that he was a member of the Russian secret police and was there to watch over the safety of his imperial master.

HURT IN 10,000-FOOT DROP.

Prof. C. C. Bonnette of St. Johnsbury, Vt., balloonist and parachute jumper, was injured seriously in an ascension at Lynn the other afternoon, and is at the Lynn Hospital. His right shoulder was broken as well as other bones.

Bonette went up in his balloon from Spring and Washington streets while a crowd looked on. He had advertised that he would ascend to a height of 20,600 feet and then drop in a parachute. There was a light wind which affected the balloon and instead of rising straight it drifted toward Lynn highlands. Bonnette was up about 10,000 feet over High Rock when he started to drop in his parachute.

The parachute did not work well and in a few seconds Bonnette had lost control, and was dashed against the roof of the house of Fred Campbell on Bay View avenue. He struck with great force and then dropped to the ground.

TO CARRY MAIL BY AEROPLANE.

To carry 100 pounds of United States mail by aeroplane, from New York City to Washington, is the plan now mapped out by Dr. William W. Christmas, a Washington surgeon, who will have on exhibition in the Aviation Show in New York a biplane of his own invention. Dr. Christmas has consulted with the Post-Office authorities and it is almost certain that he will receive a contract to handle a bag of mail between these two cities.

Paul Peck, a young Washington aviator, has been engaged to fly the Christmas machine. It is the intention of Dr. Christmas to have his machine fly from New York to Washington without a stop, expecting to average about sixty miles an hour on the way. On reaching Washington the aviator intends to land in Pennsylvania avenue, directly in front of the Post-Office Department.

The officers at the Army Aviation School at College Park, Md., will attend the show in New York. Their visit is for the purpose of familiarizing themselves with the many biplanes and monoplanes which are expected to be exhibited there.

THE BOY DIPLOMAT

OR,

YOUNG AMERICA AT THE COURT OF ST. JAMES

By ALEXANDER ARMSTRONG

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XX. (Continued)

Cal looked at the official, wondering if he would lie to His Royal Highness as to the escape of Campbell.

"He is a prisoner of State, charged with treason and supposed to have escaped a few weeks ago," the secretary replied.

"If he has escaped why do his friends seek to avenge him?" the prince asked.

"He has not been seen or heard of since his escape, I presume, but the fact of his escape was published in all the London papers at the time."

"Is it true that he did escape?"

"That is what I am now trying to find out, Your Royal Highness. A prisoner of that name did escape, and the fact was reported to this office. The friends of the prisoner, whose wife appealed to the American Minister, claim that he did not, and that his whereabouts are unknown. I have demanded an explanation of the police department, and hope soon to have it."

"Well, naturally I am interested in this matter," said the prince. "I have nothing to do with the government, as you know, Mr. Secretary, but I hope you will probe this matter to the bottom without delay and let me know the result of it. If Campbell is guilty see that he is duly tried and punished, even though my life is the penalty. If he is not, the court will speedily discharge him from custody."

"Your Royal Highness has voiced the sentiment and wishes of the American Legation," said Cal. "I know that the Campbell who escaped is not the one in whose behalf the American Minister has sought information."

The prince seemed surprised, and the Home Secretary bit his lip in suspense.

"Then he must be in confinement somewhere," said the prince, looking around at the secretary.

The secretary bowed, and then the prince turned to Cal, shook his hand, and said:

"I again thank you for your kindness and timely assistance and hope to have the pleasure of meeting you at the Duchess of Devon's to-morrow evening."

"Thanks, Your Royal Highness. I am highly honored. I was not aware Your Royal Highness was to be there."

"The duchess and I are very good friends," he laughed, as they went out together.

The prince's carriage was at a private entrance. Cal saw him enter it and drive away ere he returned to his own. Then he drove to the Legation, satisfied that the case of Patrick Campbell would soon be settled.

The Home Secretary was beaten in the game he had sought to play, and made up his mind to get out of the difficulty as quick as possible. The attack on the Prince of Wales had caused such a widespread sensation, the case could no longer be kept out of public view.

Cal had not been ten minutes at the Legation ere Mrs. Campbell was announced. He met her in a private office. She was very pale and nervous.

"Mr. Courtenay," she said, "you have been imposed upon. My husband did not escape. He is still confined in some dungeon."

"Madam, I assure you I am fully posted in the matter. Your husband did not escape, and I knew it within a few days after the escape was announced. But a man of the name of Campbell did escape, and so you can understand how it came to be thought he was your husband. I have just returned from the office of the Home Secretary. I am still pushing the case. You shall soon know where he is, and have the privilege of seeing him."

"Oh, thank you for the assurance!" she cried.

"Tell the friends of your husband to stop seeking revenge. They make it worse for him. Don't avenge a man while he is still in the hands of the enemy."

She went out without a word more, and Cal turned to report to his father the result of his interview with the Home Secretary. The Secretary of Legation was dumfounded when he learned what had happened.

"It will force them to produce Campbell and give him a trial," Cal said to him.

"Yes, I think so, myself," assented his father.

The American Minister was informed of everything, and he approved of what Cal had done.

That evening he called on the Baileys again. Both Mabel and Eugenie received him with great cordiality. The elder sister had suddenly awakened to the fact that he had preceded her in entering the society of court circles.

"I've called to give you two ladies a bit of information," he said to them.

"What is it?" Mabel asked.

"His Royal Highness is to be at the duchess' little party to-morrow evening."

Eugenie actually caught her breath, she was so astonished and delighted.

"How do you happen to know that, Cal?" Mabel asked.

"He told me so himself this morning."

"That's straight enough," she laughed, "but I am sorry I didn't know it sooner."

"Why?" he asked.

"That I might have more time to practice bowing and smiling before the mirror," and she glanced at her sister as she made the remark.

"Oh, you little goose!" he laughed. "Let me tell you something in your little ear. If you wish to have the prince admire you, be your natural self, just as though you did not think him of any more importance than any other man. He has a contempt for a woman who poses, or makes any attempt to attract him. The girl who is independent and ladylike he looks upon as one of blue blood, who is not dazzled in the glare of royalty."

"Oh, I'm awfully glad you told me that!" exclaimed Mabel. "I'm going to be a little natural all the evening, as though I didn't know a prince was different from any other man."

"Well, he isn't, but his position is altogether different," Cal replied.

"Yes, that is the only difference," said Eugenie. "I am really very glad you told us in time. You will go with us, will you not?"

"With pleasure—if permitted."

"Permitted!" and she looked reprovingly at him.

"Yes. I forced my company on your ladyship once, and you asked the sailors to throw me overboard. I have tried ever since to avoid intruding."

"Well, if it were not a violation of the proprieties, I'd pull your hair for that, Cal Courtenay!"

"Oh, dear!" he exclaimed, turning to Mabel. "She actually stooped to call me Cal!" he seemed to be so amazed, Mabel laughed heartily. Eugenie blushed in spite of herself.

"Oh, she'll call the prince Albert Edward before she has been ten minutes in his company," said the younger sister, whereupon the elder left the room.

CHAPTER XX.

THE BEAUTIFUL DUCHESS FOILED AGAIN

The Duchess of Devon was a charming hostess, and residence was a palatial one. The duke had almost unlimited wealth, and was as fond of entertaining as Her Grace. But he was a cynic, and often imitated the duchess by his cynicisms. Yet he was proud of her beauty and cleverness, and enjoyed her triumphs and defeats alike.

When Cal and the two daughters of the American Minister reached the residence of the duchess, only two other guests had preceded them—Mrs. Meredith and her daughter Eleanor. Her Grace received them with charming cordiality, and soon all were engaged in animated conversation.

The young ladies were eager to meet the prince, and as time wore on they became anxious. Eugenie was really excited, but Mabel was as natural as a child.

At last His Royal Highness was announced, and the duchess received him in a manner befitting his rank and hers. She presented the young ladies and Mrs. Meredith. He was cordially gracious, and laughed, and chatted with all of them in the free, unconstrained manner of a polished gentleman.

"I owe such a debt of gratitude to Courtenay," he said to Eleanor Meredith, "that I am conscious of a weakness for everybody I meet from beyond the Atlantic."

"Your Royal Highness will find that feeling cordially reciprocated by all Americans," Eleanor replied.

"Then it was fortunate in more ways than one," he remarked.

"Yes, for you and for both countries," she said. "Mr. Courtenay is one who seems to have been born fortunate."

"He seems to have a great future before him," assented the prince. "Lord Brereton looks upon him as the most promising young man he ever met, and I heard to-day in the office of the Home Secretary that he is regarded as a very brilliant diplomat."

"I am sure such opinions ought to open a future for him," said Eleanor.

"He is one who will carve out a future for himself if one does not come his way," and then the duchess interrupted them to propose a game. That brought him into close quarters with the others, and a merry hour passed.

Later in the evening Knowlton and Augusta Brereton arrived, and then the duchess took charge of Cal for half an hour.

"You didn't go to Paris," she said to him over in a corner.

"No, Your Grace. The emergency did not appear."

"Colonel Mowbray is in London, and that saved you the trip."

"Yes, Your Grace," said he, admitting a thing he knew nothing about, merely to see what would follow. She gave a slight start, and said:

"Knowing I had met the colonel, why did you not bring him with you this evening?"

"I could not dream of such presumption, Your Grace."

"Oh, you have carte blanche to bring any friend of yours to see me. Really I am more drawn to you Americans than any people whom I have met."

"Thanks, Your Grace. I know that we are all drawn toward you by some irresistible attraction," he replied. "Were Your Grace to visit America you would find all the people at your feet. I believe I have told Your Grace how we worship women over there."

"Yes, but I don't care to be worshipped. I would rather be loved."

"That is woman's prerogative—her inalienable right. But she is a divinity with the majority of us."

"Well, tell the colonel you wish to bring him here. Don't tell him I asked you to do so, or that I had even mentioned his name, for I fear he is a bit cynical, and might misconstrue it. When shall I expect you?"

"That I will inform Your Grace when I have seen him."

"Why, have you not seen him since his return?"

"Not in regard to any visits in the city," was the reply.

"What is his London address?"

"The American Legation, Your Grace."

A shade of disappointment passed over her face.

She knew well that she could not pass behind the Legation in which the location of Mowbray was now swallowed up. He had again foiled her, and in such a diplomatic way she could not pursue any further without betraying her own hand.

(To be continued)

FROM ALL POINTS

According to advices received by Edward Nusbaum, of Greely, Col., whose son is a member of an expedition now in Guatemala under the direction of Dr. E. L. Hewitt, director of the Archaeological Institute of America, good progress is being made in the research work in that country.

A palace built by the Mayas is being uncovered and much rare statuary and giant stone gods have been brought to light. These it is believed were constructed about the time the Egyptians were building their pyramids and possibly before that time. So deep were the ruins buried trees have been growing from the roofs of the temple.

Accompanied by their faithful dog and nineteen-year-old pack pony, Mr. and Mrs. Dwight L. Woolf, known as the "Walking Woolfs," started from their home in Kansas City, Kan., the other day on a 10,000-mile hike through the western part of the United States and Canada. They will go to Denver, then to San Francisco and Seattle and into British Columbia. Most of the return trip will be through Canada.

The bite of a monkey is given as the basis of a suit for \$1,025 filed in the Superior Court of Cincinnati, O., recently by Robert Ryan, thirteen years old, against Clara Hallock, who keeps a bird and animal store. Mrs. Kate Ryan, the boy's mother, appears in the suit as "next friend" and plaintiff. It is alleged that on March 28 the boy was in the store when the monkey, which, it is asserted, was permitted to run loose, bit him on the hand. The complaint says that instead of calling a doctor, the employes of the place treated the wound with vinegar. It is said that blood poisoning developed and the loss of the arm is threatened.

Members of the Jackot colony of Lakeville, Mass., poor whites descended from a Frenchman who settled here before the Revolution, are indignant over the action of the state police in preventing the exchange of the wife of one of the leading Jackots for a horse. The Jackots would rather barter than eat. A patriarch had indulged his propensity of swapping until he had nothing left but his clothing and his wife. In exchange for a horse he gave his wife to his brother. The horse was worth \$5. Twelve hours later the patriarch swapped the horse for another horse. His brother took the woman to Brockton, and his efforts to swap her for anything of equal value attracted the attention of the police. They made the patriarch take his wife back, but the brother protested that the exchange was made in good faith.

The Secretary of War now reports that the total cost to the Government of twenty-eight Army posts it is proposed to abandon has been \$19,961,882. If they were sold

the War Department believes it would get all the way from a minimum figure of \$11,785,346 to \$24,832,000 for them. The land alone cost the Government only \$339,707. The value of this land, some of which was obtained for nothing, is now estimated from a minimum of \$8,471,071 to \$13,733,711. Governors Island, the most valuable post, is estimated at a minimum of \$4,070,000 and a maximum of \$6,280,000. Its actual cost was \$322,314, aside from the original cost, of which there is no record; on buildings \$192,093 has been spent; for a water supply \$27,485, and on roads and minor improvements \$102,735; the buildings are now valued at a minimum of \$65,000 and a maximum of \$250,000.

The United States gunboat Yorktown, one of the vessels of Dewey's fleet which captured Manila, was placed out of commission at the Mare Island Navy Yard, Cal., the other afternoon. The vessel probably will be sold to one of the Central or South American republics, although it is reported that Mexico has made a provisional offer of purchase. The Yorktown was commanded by the late Admiral Robley D. Evans at Valparaiso, Chile, during the strained relations between the United States and Chile in 1891. It was Evans's diplomacy backed by the guns of the Yorktown that brought about a speedy settlement of the dispute.

To keep sparrows from nesting in the mouth of the horse surmounted by General Tecumseh Sherman at the 59th street and Fifth avenue entrance to Central Park, it may be necessary to place a muzzle on the steed. Farmers protect the eaves of their houses with wire netting, and that seems to be the only solution of the problem for the Park Department. Park employes have noticed the birds flitting about the statue, but until recently never gave any attention to what they were up to. A long string in the mouth of a sparrow that alighted on the head of the horse and hopped inside his throat attracted the attention of a sharp-eyed person, and immediately it was discovered that in the throat of the horse was a nest.

Liberato and Matei Pedicini, cobblers, of Jamaica, L. I., the other day parted with \$500 in bills, a gold watch and other jewelry worth \$100, upon the assurance of a couple of fellow-countrymen that they would receive in return \$1,000. With the \$1,000 they planned to make a million or so in the stock market and return to Italy and purchase titles. The Pedicini brothers were anxious to profitably invest their savings when they met the Italians whom Mateo had known in Syracuse. They were flashily dressed and apparently prosperous. They would exchange \$1,000 worth of securities for \$600. The exchange took place at Flushing bridge at noon. When the Pedicini brothers reached the back room of their cobbling shop and opened the package they discovered a slab of bologna sausage and some blank papers in a wad.

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ITEMS OF CURRENT NEWS

When Edward D. Pomeroy became ill recently at Buckland, Mass., he pleaded with the doctor to keep him alive for two weeks longer because the coffin he made with his own hands was being used by six sitting hens, and he did not want to disturb them. The doctor did his best, but Pomeroy died and new nests had to be found for the hens.

While racing with an automobile at mile-a-minute speed at a Coney Island motordome the other night, William Mullen, riding a motorcycle, lost control of his machine, shot over the rim of the steeply-banked "saucer" and plunged into a crowd of spectators, causing a panic. People were knocked down in numbers and surgeons treated more than a half dozen who were injured. Mullen was thrown unconscious at the edge of the track and his injuries were so serious that it was believed he would die.

The stoppage of the electric streetcar line of San Francisco, Cal., for half an hour the other night was caused by lightning, which put out of business the big power company in Tuolumne County, in the Sierra Nevadas. The lightning burned two big insulator wires, and the power was instantly shut off in San Francisco, more than two hundred miles away. The street railroad company managed to start cars in half an hour by using an auxiliary power plant of its own in the city and by buying electric power from the local company. This is the first accident of this kind due to lightning for many years.

The population of the Columbia garden zoo, Anaconda, Mont., was increased by five recently. A quintet of black wolves were born and Bess, the mother, was the proudest animal at the resort. Black wolves have become a rarity during the last few years. Bess has a history. Several years ago a hunt was being made for female black wolves. An Indian boy on the Crow reservation caught Bess in a trap in the Big Horn Canyon. An Indian friend in Billings wrote for him to the management of the gardens and received an offer of \$50 for the animal. He accepted it. Since that time Bess has shown scruples against race suicide and black wolves are not uncommon at the gardens.

Strong measures are being taken to hush up a prison scandal, ventilated in the first instance by the newspaper Herald. So startling were the revelations that an official has recently gone down to Figueras in Catalonia ostensibly to hold a drastic inquiry, but really to white-wash the administration of prisons if public indignation permits of that procedure. According to the press investigators there are unspeakable horrors in the dungeons of the country. Men are chained in underground vaults, reeking with pestilential vapors and dripping damp, their only food being moldy bread and muddy water. One prison governor is said to have declared frankly that the insanitary dungeons are crowded purposely, to facilitate discipline in an understaffed prison and to lessen the number of prisoners by the process of disease. It is also declared that brutal flogging is part of the daily routine and many prisoners, incarcerated for trivial offenses, have died under the cruelty.

JOKES AND JESTS.

Pompous Lady—Yes, Bridget, my daughter comes out tomorrow night. Washerwoman—So does my old man; but he was only in for six months.

Mistress—You may go to your room now and change your dress. The butler will show you the way. Maid (shocked)—Oh, ma'am, I know how.

Judge Knott—Why did you rob this man in broad daylight? Prisoner—I couldn't help it, your honor. I had an engagement every night that week.

The young man was disconsolate. Said he: "I asked her if I could see her home?" "Why, certainly," she answered; "I will send you a picture of it."

"How do you like running your restaurant on the no tipping plan?" "First rate," replied the proprietor. "It enables me to raise the prices 10 per cent. on the bill of fare."

"Grace," said the father, from the head of the stairs, "is that sweetheart of yours an auctioneer?" "No, father. Why?" "Because he keeps on saying he's going—going, but he hasn't gone yet!"

Irate Customer—See here, you said that refrigerator you sold me was fully supplied with locks and keys. Dealer—It is. Every provision department locks tight. Customer—Huh! I don't care about the provisions. What I want locked up is the ice.

Doctor—Did you get that mixture of wine and iron that I ordered? Deacon Waters—Yes; it was first rate. Never enjoyed a bottle of medicine better in my life. Drank it up without takin' breath. But, doctor, there was too much iron in it. Doctor—H'm! So I should imagine. Deacon Waters—Yes, the iron all went to my feet and made 'em so heavy I could hardly walk.

WHAT SAVED THE TRAIN.

By D. W. Stevens.

"Click, click! clickety click!"

"Track all clear. Number Seven thirty minutes late."

That gives me over an hour to wait. Heigho! I do wish there was something to keep a fellow awake in this deucedly dull place!"

Oscar Damer yawned wearily as he moved about the little station where he had been installed lately as station agent, putting things in order for the night, and then threw himself in a chair to wait out his remaining time; but insensibly his head began to droop, his breathing grew deep and regular, and soon he was lost in the land of dreams.

Suddenly he came out of it, startled and bewildered.

Two burly black figures, with masks over their faces, stood near him.

Before he could collect his thoughts, or realize what it meant, he was seized and bound fast in his chair, his pockets rifled, and his desk searched, with a result which brought an ejaculation of disgust from one of the robbers.

"Not much milk in that cocoanut. Say, young man, what time does the express go by here?"

"11.05," answered Damer.

"Come, Jim! There's no time to lose! Shin up that pole and cut the wires. We don't want the whole country down on us after the thing's done. I'm off to the bridge."

The young agent could hear the rattle of the falling wires as the nippers severed them, and the tick of the instrument was silenced in the room.

They had destroyed his one means of calling help, could he manage to release himself, which there was little chance of doing.

After one slight struggle with the bonds, which cut painfully into his flesh, he gave it up, and began to hitch the heavy chair which held him across the floor, an inch at a time, toward a window which opened on the side looking toward the bridge.

He could see nothing clearly at that distance, but a constant rasping sound struck upon his ear.

"The wretches!" he muttered. "They are sawing the timbers! They intend, of course, to wreck and plunder the train, and they will have plenty of time for the work."

The two men came back presently, disputing between themselves.

"Tain't enough just to weaken them beams. We ought to cut through the girder, then the whole thing would go down smash."

"Why didn't you make it up to come earlier, if you wanted to take the foundations out? Halloa! Where's that chap? Oh, there! I thought you told us the train ought to be here afore now?"

"11.05 is the schedule time. She is late tonight."

"How much late?"

"How can I tell? I might have found out for you if you hadn't been in such a hurry to cut the wires," said the agent, not thinking it best to betray the extent of his own knowledge.

"Don't you want us to let you loose so as you can fix it up for us?" inquired Jim.

"Stop your blathering. Don't you think"—to his companion—"we had better quiet him?"

"What's the use? There's no one to hear; but you can gag him, if you like."

Jim drew out a dirty-looking handkerchief, and began to search about him for some object suitable for a gag, but Damer, not relishing the prospect, turned his head toward the window suddenly in a listening attitude.

The ruse succeeded. Supposing he heard the first sound of the approaching train, the two men hurried from the room, locking the door after them, and he could hear their footsteps going back toward the bridge.

Undoubtedly they would finish their work there, which would make the destruction of the train certain.

Damer groaned, then began by the same slow process to hitch his chair toward the table where an oil-lamp was burning. A ruler lay near it; after a few times trying he succeeded in getting this in his teeth, and with it pushed the lamp from the table.

It fell with a crash to the floor, but his purpose failed—the flame went out and he was left in total darkness.

He had thought by this desperate measure to secure the means of releasing himself by burning his bonds.

Once free, there was a possibility that he could cross the river in time to stop the train before it reached the bridge.

The bits of broken glass were under his feet, and with a new thought he threw his weight to one side until the chair toppled and went over; the framework cracked with the shock, and yielded still further to his strain upon it, so that he succeeded by and by in working one hand free. This was better than cutting the cords with the broken glass, but it was a tedious task still to pick the knots which secured him.

The whole aspect of the outer night had changed when he stood by the open window once more.

A close blackness had settled over the earth, with a vague whisper running through it from time to time, like a shuddering sigh.

Giving no heed to the portentous signs, Oscar strained his eyes in the direction of the distant track.

A reddish glare seemed to grow against the blackness while he gazed. It was the headlight of the locomotive just coming into sight. Too late for any effort of his to save the train! He felt weak and faint, a great rush and roar filled his ears, the very earth seemed to quiver and rock, and for one brief instant he thought his senses were deserting him; then he turned his eyes and beheld a sight which drove every other consideration out of his mind.

A black whirlwind was sweeping down the valley, with vivid flashes of lightning cutting into its gloomy depths, with deep rolls of thunder rising amid the crashing and grinding of the destruction which it wrought in its course.

Great trees were torn up by the roots or snapped off like pipestems. Bushes, sticks, grass, even stones, were all taken up by the resistless force and made a hurtling chaos in midair; sharp gusts ran across the outer space, converging toward that center of whirling winds, while the rain drove down in blinding sheets, that were caught and held aside in alternate moments by the fierce breath of the cyclone.

With all the terror of that picture newly imprinted on

his brain, Oscar Damer found himself at almost the same moment in the midst of it.

He threw himself upon his face and clung desperately to whatever he could grasp, while the wind raged over him and the storm beat down upon him; the roof was torn away from over his head, and the building was racked, and threatened with entire demolition. It was all over in three minutes' time. He struggled to his feet, battered and breathless.

The outer edge of the cyclone had swept the station, while the terrible central force spent itself further to the right.

Not a vestige of the bridge was left, but on the farther side of the storm-track the bright headlight shone steadily against the midnight gloom, brought to a stand by the vigilance of the trainmen, who hurried forward with their lanterns to discover the amount of mischief which had been done.

To Oscar Damer's excited imagination it seemed as if that cyclone had been a direct interposition of Providence to sweep those evil-doers off the face of the earth.

At any rate, it had swallowed them up, while he, on the one side, and the train, with its precious freight of many lives, on the other, had been saved.

ON BLONDIN'S BACK.

Harry Calcord, artist, now of Chicago, ran away from home and went to sea. Before he got through with his adventures he rode across Niagara Falls three times on the back of Blondin, on a tight-rope. He says he would not do it again, but that he did not suffer from fear.

"In the year 1858," he said, "I joined Blondin in Boston. He was of the Francona troupe, including Martinetti and the famous Ravels. I was their scenic artist, and painted scenes with a whitewash brush. We disbanded in Cincinnati, and there it occurred to Blondin to cross Niagara on a tight-rope, and I went to the Falls with him.

"We had no end of trouble getting the necessary permits to extend the ropes. Blondin only spoke a little English; that was one difficulty; but finally we succeeded in getting them from Porter, who owned the American side, and the rest was easy.

"Blondin wanted to carry the rope from Terrapin Tower and across to Davis' Hotel, which would have led over Horseshoe Falls, through the mist and the spray of the great cataract.

"They objected, because Blondin was sure to fall, they said. The spray would keep his rope damp, and I, who had engaged to go on his back, was very glad of it.

"Finally we stretched the rope from White's pleasure ground across to the Clifton House. Not far away from the place there is now a suspension bridge. There was 2,000 feet of the rope. It was of manila, 3 inches in diameter, made in a New York ropewalk, in two pieces. Blondin joined them with a long splice, which, when the rope was extended, was in the center of the span. It took us nearly five months to stretch the rope and to get guy lines in place.

"It was 250 feet above water at its lowest point, which was 50 feet below the highest. In other words, there was a grade of 50 feet in each 1,000 feet. There were 75,000

feet of guy line altogether. Each of them was weighted with a 10-pound sandbag to drop them out of the way of his balance-pole, and in putting them up Blondin crossed a score of times.

"In July, 1860, we went across. I took my place on Blondin's back, and he began the descent from the Canadian side on the rope. By reason of the fact that I had to bear my weight on his shoulders, and had to use my arms, and with main strength to support myself.

"I told Blondin when I wanted to rest, and then I dropped down on the rope on one foot, and waited till my arms were relieved, when I would spring up again, using only my arms to lift and hold myself in place.

"There was a great crowd there. I did not see them at first. I do not remember what I thought. From my place on Blondin's back I could look out to the other shore and see below me the stunted pines thrusting their sharp points up from the edge of the foaming water, ready to split us if we fell. I remember, too, that I was anxious to get over, and I also recall that the great rope before us made swings from side to side. We afterward knew that the rope swung 40 feet from the center, and I felt the necessity of preserving my self-possession, and I did it.

"There was a 40-foot length between the guys on one side and those of the other that it was impossible to make steady. It was the middle span. Below us, a distance of 250 feet, roared the river, and over it we swung from side to side, still moving on steadily, however.

"Blondin never trembled. When he had gone 10 feet on this middle span somebody on the American side pulled the outer guy line. We afterward found that it was done intentionally. The rope was stopped in its swing. Blondin stopped, and his pole went from side to side in a vain effort to enable him to secure his balance. At one time it was up and down on the right side, at another up and down on the left; and I recall now with wonder that I was only curious to know whether he would succeed in getting control of himself or not. I didn't feel any fear.

"Failing of getting his balance, he started to run across the horrible span, and we safely reached the point where the guy rope came out from the American shore. Then, to steady himself, Blondin put his foot on the guy rope and tried to stop, but the guy line broke, and with a dash of speed he ran swiftly 25 feet further to the next point where the guys met the main rope. There he recovered his balance, and whispered, rather than said: 'Decendez vous!' The perspiration stood out on his neck and shoulders in great beads, and we balanced ourselves on the swaying rope. Presently he said 'Allons!' and I raised myself to his shoulders, and we went on in safety, and without incident, toward the shore.

"It was not until we landed that I appreciated what had been done. Then it occurred to me that the man who pulled the guy rope was one of those that had bet that the feat could never be accomplished, and my indignation mastered any reactionary feeling of fear.

"You see, many thousand dollars were bet upon the ability of Blondin to carry a man over, and human cupidity stops at no sacrifice.

"I crossed again, twice, the last time under the patronage of the Prince of Wales. He congratulated us personally, and gave us each a purse of one hundred pounds."

GOOD READING

Edward Hinkle, who was lately given five years in the Moundville, Va., penitentiary for stealing a piano, made a good prisoner and was farmed out under contract, as a shipping clerk. In a short time he had stolen \$4,000 worth of hides and shipped them home to be held until he was released in November. He will now get a second term.

Not long ago in Switzerland a vagrant taken into custody by the police was found to have his coat padded with bank notes amounting to \$28,000. He explained that some time before he had received a legacy of \$20,000 and had registered with heaven a vow to spend none of it; hence, although at the time he was arrested he was starving, he had kept his word.

Residents of Prospect street, Yonkers, N. Y., have recently protested to city officials against blasting in the street for the present, because 300 eggs expected to hatch soon are shaken every time there is an explosion. The city is unable to comply with the request because a private contractor is doing the blasting, and the citizens declare they will sue the city if all the eggs do not produce chickens.

Ralph Bock, nineteen, outfielder of an amateur team at Sandusky, O., batted stones while awaiting his turn at the plate in the game. He struck one of the stones a glancing blow which caused it to strike the pupil of his right eye, destroying the sight. A triangular piece of eyeball about an eighth of an inch in each dimension was cut out by the blow, but was replaced by Dr. C. B. Bliss and held in position by two stitches. Dr. Bliss says he hopes to save the appearance of the eye.

What is probably the first clubhouse to be erected in this country for the use of the Boy Scouts was dedicated at Mount Vernon, a suburb of Baltimore, the other day. Chief Scout C. H. Livingston, of Washington, president of the Boy Scouts of America; Ernest Thompson Seton, the naturalist, and other scout leaders, took part in the exercises. The new clubhouse and 30 acres of playground surrounding it already represent an outlay of nearly \$50,000, and \$25,000 more is to be spent in giving the place its final touches.

In pulling out a roll of money with which to pay for a shave at Atlantic City, N. J., B. C. Phillips discovered he had been carrying about a farewell message from a suicide for two days without knowing it. It was written in a fine feminine hand around three edges of a \$5 treasury note and read as follows. "This is my last \$5 in the world, and now I have no desire to live. Farewell! Whoever finds this, please say a prayer for a lost soul." Mr. Phillips does not recall where he got the bill in change. The police to whom the discovery was reported have received no word of a suicide.

After being hit on the forehead with a ball James Fleming, ten years old, of No. 334 Pearl street, New York, fell heavily on the sidewalk and his skull was fractured recently. Dr. Savage took him to the Volunteer Hospital, where it was said he was in a dangerous condition. With several of his playmates, young Fleming was playing ball. He was the catcher. A foul ball struck him on the forehead with such force that he was thrown backward on his head. He got up apparently unhurt, and was about to continue the game, but fell senseless to the street.

In the past century advances in surgery have been so great that one is almost prepared to hear of any wonder, and in this respect we notice in a Paris contemporary a startling announcement recently which, we are told, is taken from a reputable scientific review. It is to the effect that a surgeon has invented a sewing machine for use after operations and in place of the stitching by hand. We are told that the doctor in the first instance constructed his machine by way of recreation, but the results were such that he has felt justified in introducing it to members of the profession. Each stitch, it is said, occupies only the fraction of a second and is effected with a precision far superior to that of the most deft fingers.

The last duck that was saved from starving to death by the local trolley employees of Penn Yan, N. Y., who caught and fed them last winter, was shipped to New York city the other day, consigned to one of the many parks in that city. Some time ago three canvas-backs were shipped, but the one that was sent recently was not strong enough, so it was kept here longer. When the lake was closed by the ice last winter many of these ducks were frozen to the ice and others became so near famished that they were unable to fly. The trolley men running between here and Branchport when they saw the birds in such a condition took them to the power house and fed them. The majority were freed after the ice broke up, but the four largest were shipped to New York city.

The third fatal accident in the Schried family, of No. 242 3d street, New York, occurred the other day, when Florian, a lad five years old, was killed by a bullet from a cartridge that had been thrown into a bonfire. The child was playing in front of his home with several other children. A short distance away some older boys had a bonfire blazing in the centre of the street. One of them threw a box of cartridges on the fire. There was an explosion, and little Florian fell with a bullet in his heart. Patrolman Smith took the child to a drug store. An ambulance surgeon said he had been killed instantly. About two years ago Florian's oldest sister, seven years old, was run over and killed by an automobile. About five months ago a brother, twelve years old, was killed by a brick falling from a roof.

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

BOOMERANG TO KILL DUCKS.

An American hunter who carries boomerangs instead of a repeating shotgun is a curiosity, but Vernon Tantlinger, a local nimrod of St. Joseph, Mo., uses the Australian war weapon when he goes after ducks.

Tantlinger is an expert with the boomerang and recently bagged twelve ducks with eight throws of his club. Tantlinger says that as the statutes do not prohibit the use of boomerangs he can throw all he wants to.

SWISS BOY SCOUTS.

Switzerland is to have its boy scouts, based on English lines. An influential committee, consisting of several professors and the heads of various sporting organizations, has been formed in Geneva to organize the corps, not only in that town, but all over Switzerland, with branches in the chief cities, and the Swiss Alpine club will also co-operate. This movement, it is thought, will be a great success in Switzerland, where every healthy boy must eventually become a soldier.

BANDITS ROB A POKER GAME.

While a number of wealthy Winnipeg residents were engaged in a game of poker the other night in a hotel the room was invaded by two "hold-up" men. At the point of revolvers they were ordered to hold up their hands, and promptly obeyed.

While one of the men covered the players the other gathered everything worth taking, including money on the tables and in the pockets of the players, amounting to \$6,000, besides several hundred dollars' worth of jewelry. They left no trace of their identity.

A YOUTHFUL INDIANA FINANCIER.

Ralph James is only 14 years old, but already he has his own ideas regarding finance and how to obtain the greatest amount of money with the least possible exertion.

Rain fell in torrents at Columbus, Ind., the other day, choking the sewer and making a lake of the public square. The town was crowded with farmers whose horses were hitched at the rack in the square. When the time came to go home the farmers found they would have to wade through water knee deep to reach their horses. Then it was that young James arrived. He would unhitch the horses and drive them to dry land at only a charge of 25 cents for each horse, a modest request, but the farmers balked.

Some suggested a dime, while other thought 15 cents would be about right. "Two bits or nothing," said James. "I have the monopoly on this job; pay me my price or get your own horses." The farmers paid, and James has sufficient money to buy a new suit of clothes if he happens to want one.

MAPS FOR MOTOR CYCLES.

Efforts are being made by the Federation of American Motorcyclists to increase interest in touring and promote

motorcycling. President G. H. Hamilton and J. Leo Sauer, Chairman of the Legislative Committee of the Federation, are now negotiating with the Touring Bureau of the American Automobile Association, endeavoring to obtain for the Federation members special rates for the elaborate route books and road maps of the American Automobile Association.

The maps of the autoists are considered the best and newest published, and are practically invaluable for tourists. They are being improved and added to daily by the Touring Bureau of the automobile association.

The efforts of the Federation officials in trying to get this service for the many thousand Federation riders is another indication of the aggressiveness of the Federation, which is striving to aid motorcyclists in every possible way. And now with the coming of summer, when many riders will be making distance tours, every effort is being made to obtain these authentic maps.

TRAINING EAGLES OF WAR.

Some officers at Nice, Paris, according to a recent French newspaper, have been training six eagles to attack aeroplanes and dirigible balloons. Although many attempts have been made to construct a gun for destroying aeroplanes, the problem has not yet been solved. These officers therefore chose eagles as capable of attaining the necessary speed and height in the air and began by habituating them to the noise of motors and firearms. Then, by fastening choice morsels of food on small balloons and framework representing an aeroplane, they have trained the birds to throw themselves fiercely on such objects and tear them as they tear their prey.

Given the power of the eagle's beak and claws it seems likely than an eagle could be counted on to wreck an aeroplane or tear open a dirigible, but, as the Gaulois points out, a practical test would be difficult to apply.

BALL PLAYER BADLY HURT.

Warren S. Taylor, '13 of Shade Gap, Penn., who was struck above the left temple with a baseball while at bat in the Princeton-Lawrenceville baseball game lately, is more severely injured than was at first thought. Dr. Samuel Lloyd, of New York City, operated on him and found that three blood-vessels had been ruptured and were bleeding. Two of these are close to the brain. Although the doctors expect him to recover, he is still in a critical condition.

Taylor was catching for Princeton at Lawrenceville the other afternoon. Early in the game, while at bat, he was struck above the left temple by the pitcher. He rode back to Princeton that afternoon and was taken to the infirmary. Although not unconscious, a cohasia set in, and late last night trepanning was performed and three blood-vessels were found to be bleeding.

This is the second serious injury in baseball at Princeton in the last two years, Carter being critically hurt in much the same manner while practising last spring.

ITCH POWDER.



Geewhiz! What fun you can have with this stuff. Moisten the tip of your finger, tap it on the contents of the box, and a little bit will stick. Then shake hands with your friend, or drop a speck down his back. In a minute he will feel as if he had the seven years' itch. It

will make him scratch, roar, squirm and make faces. But it is perfectly harmless, as it is made from the seeds of wild roses. The horrible itch stops in a few minutes, or can be checked immediately by rubbing the spot with a wet cloth. While it is working, you will be apt to laugh your suspender buttons off. The best joke of all. Price 10 cents a box, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

GOOD LUCK BANKS.



Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickelled brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

L. SENARENS,
347 Winthrop St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

CACHOO OR SNEEZING POWDER.



The greatest fun-maker of them all. A small amount of this powder, when blown in a room, will cause everyone to sneeze without anyone knowing where it comes from. It is very light, will float in the air for some time, and penetrate every nook and corner of a room. It is perfectly harmless. Cachoo is put up in bottles, and one bottle contains enough to be used from 10 to 15 times. Price, by mail, 10c. each; 3 for 25c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

X-RAY WONDER



This is a wonderful little optical illusion. In use, you apparently see the bones in your hand, the hole in a pipe-stem, the lead in a pencil, etc. The principle on which it is operated cannot be disclosed here, but it will afford no end of fun for any person who has one. Price, 15 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 215 Walworth St., B'klyn., N. Y.

THE SWIMMING FISH



Here is a fine mechanical toy. It is an imitation goldfish, about 4 1/2 inches long, and contains a water-tight compartment which will not allow it to sink. To keep it in a natural position, the lower fin is ballasted with lead. To make it work, a spring is wound up. You then throw it in the water, and the machinery inside causes the tail to wiggle, and propel it in the most lifelike manner. When it runs down the fish floats until it is recovered, and it can then be rewound. Races between two of these fishes are very interesting. Price, 25 cents each by mail, postpaid.

J. KENNEDY, 303 West 127th St., N. Y.

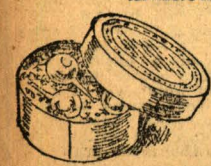
LAUGHABLE EGG TRICK



This is the funniest trick ever exhibited and always produces roars of laughter. The performer says to the audience that he requires some eggs for one of his experiments. As no spectator carries any, he calls his assistant, taps him on top of the head, he gags, and an egg comes out of his mouth. This is repeated until six eggs are produced. It is an easy trick to perform, once you know how, and always makes a hit. Directions given for working it. Price, 25 cents by mail, postpaid.

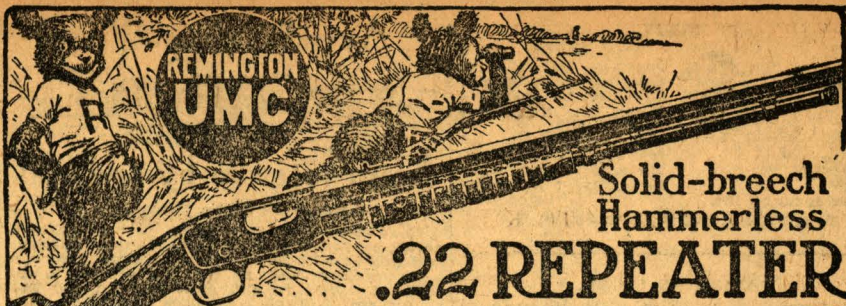
H. F. LANG, 215 Walworth St., B'klyn., N. Y.

ANARCHIST BOMBS.



They are small glass vials, and contain a liquid chemical that produces a horrible odor. When dropped in a room, they will make every person present rush out, holding their noses. In a few minutes the smell will disappear. Perfectly harmless. No danger of any evil effect. The only risk is that your friends may make you smell one of the bombs yourself, if they catch you. Price, 10c. a box, or 3 for 25c., by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



Solid-breech Hammerless .22 REPEATER

SOLID-BREECH HAMMERLESS SIDE-EJECTING

Sure Safe Shooting for Man or Boy—And a Simple Rifle to Care For

The Remington-UMC .22 Repeater is rifled, sighted and tested for accuracy by expert gunsmiths. It shoots as you hold. The simple, improved safety device on every Remington-UMC .22 repeater never fails to work. Accidental discharge is impossible.

The Remington-UMC .22 Repeater is easily cared for. In taking down, your fingers are your only tools. The breech block, firing pin and extractor, come out in one piece—permitting the barrel to be cleaned from the breech.

The action handles .22 short, .22 long or .22 long rifle cartridges—any or all at the same time without adjustment.

Remington-UMC—the perfect shooting combination

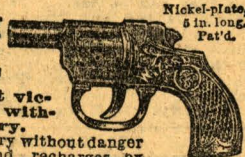
REMINGTON ARMS-UNION METALLIC CARTRIDGE CO.

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Almost anyone can learn it at home. Small cost. Send to-day 2-cent stamp for particulars and proof. O. A. SMITH, Room D 61-823 Bigelow St., Peoria, Ill.

Wizard Repeating LIQUID PISTOL



Will stop the most vicious dog (or man) without permanent injury. Perfectly safe to carry without danger of leakage. Fires and recharges by pulling the trigger. Loads from any Liquid. No cartridges required. Over six shots in one loading. All dealers, or by mail, 50c. Pistol with rubber covered holster, 55c. Holsters separate, 10c. Money order or U. S. stamps. No coins.

PARKER, STEARNS & CO., 273 GEORGIA AVE., BROOKLYN, N. Y.



WEIRD & NOBBY 15c
This Skull & Crossbones Ring. Oxidized all over finish; flashing red or green eyes. Looks well, wears well and pleases. Draws attention everywhere. Price only 15c or 2 for 30c; worth more. Wholesale: 12 for \$1.00. Big seller.
W. E. HILLPOT, Frenchtown, N. J.

LOTS OF FUN FOR A DIME

Ventriloquists Double Throat. Film roof of mouth; always Astound and mystify your friends. Invaluable; greatest thing yet. A puppy; sing like a canary and imitate birds and beasts of field and forest. LOADS OF FUN. Wonderful invention. Thousands sold. Price only 10 cents; 2 for 25 cents or 12 for 50 cents. DOUBLE THROAT CO. DEPT. K FRENCHTOWN, N. J.



BIG VALUE FOR 10 CENTS.
50 Popular Songs with words and music, 20 Stories of Adventure, 25 Pictures of Pretty Girls, 20 new Games for young folks, 25 Pictures of the Presidents, 50 Ways to Make Money, 1 Great Joke Book, 1 Book on Love and Courtship, 1 Book on Magic's Book on Letter Writing, 1 Dream Book and Fortune Teller, 2 Cook Books, 1 Base Ball Book, gives rules for all popular games, 128 Comedians, 50 Verses for Autograph Albums. Cut this out and return to us with ten cents and we will send all the above by mail 4c. each.

B. E. KING CO., ANDOVER, OHIO.

Trick Shooting—

the methods followed by noted crack revolver and pistol shots— simply outlined by American Team Captain.

157 Pages—67 Illustrations. Tells how to stand, hold and aim.

Send 50c in stamps to

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MEAD CYCLE CO., Dept. P285, CHICAGO

24 "Let's Get Acquainted" Cards, 10c

Boys, they pave the way to lots of fun and plenty of good times. You may use 6 different names or just your own. Catalogue den pictures and books free. Bond Publishing Co., B9, Columbus, O.

WIRELESS TELEGRAPH

A useful, instructive and amusing outfit. It consists of two telegraph instruments, one for each station. The stations must be within hearing distance of each other. A Morse code or alphabet goes with each set, and, once it is mastered, you can operate any telegraph instrument, and command a good salary. With our system you can send messages to your friend at quite a distance, and receive his reply. Price, 15 cents by mail, postpaid.

J. KENNEDY, 303 West 127th St., N. Y.

THE MAGIC WALLET

Lots of fun can be had with it, puzzling people, while being used in a practical way to carry bank bills, letters, invoices, etc. Open with the straight bands on the left, lay a bill on top of bands, close wallet; open to the left, and the bill will be found under the crossed bands. Close wallet, open to the right, and the bill will be found under straight bands. How did it get there? That's the question. Price, 12 cents each, postpaid.

J. KENNEDY, 303 West 127th St., N. Y.

HINDOO FLOWER-POT TRICK

With this trick you can make a plant grow right up in a flower-pot before the eyes of your audience. An ordinary empty earthen flower-pot is handed to the spectators for examination. A handkerchief is then placed over it, and you repeat a few magic words, and wave your wand over it. When the handkerchief is removed there is a beautiful plant, apparently in full bloom, in the pot. Full directions with each outfit. Price, 15 cents by mail, postpaid.

M. O'NEILL, 425 W. 56th St., N. Y.

FIFIFL



Also known as a Japanese butterfly. A pleasing novelty enclosed in an envelope. When the envelope is opened Fifi will fly out through the air for several yards. Made of colored paper to represent a butterfly. Price, 10c.

By six inches wide.

M. O'NEILL, 425 W. 56th St., N. Y.

VANISHING CIGAR.



This cigar is made in exact imitation of a good one. It is held by a rubber cord which, with the attached safety pin, is fastened on the inside of the sleeve. When offered to a friend, as it is about to be taken, it will instantly disappear.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 215 Walworth St., B'klyn., N. Y.

JAPANESE TWIRLER.



A wonderful imported paper novelty. By a simple manipulation of the wooden handles a number of beautiful figures can be produced. It takes on several combinations of magnificent colors. Price, 10c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

SPRING TOPS

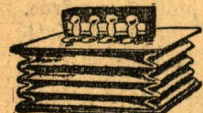


Something new for the boys. A top you can spin without a string. This is a decided novelty. It is of large size, made of brass, and has a heavy balance rim. The shank contains a powerful spring and has an outer casing. The top of the shank has a milled edge for winding it up. When wound, you merely lift the outer casing, and the top spins at such a rapid speed that the balance rim keeps it going a long time. Without doubt the handsomest and best top on the market.

Price 12 cents each, by mail, post-paid

H. F. LANG, 215 Walworth St., B'klyn., N. Y.

LITTLE ACCORDEONS



The smallest, cheapest, and best sounding musical instrument for the price. This perfect little accordion has four keys and eight notes, a complete scale, upon which you can play almost any tune. It is about 5 x 2 1/2 inches in size, and is not a toy, but a practical and serviceable accordion in every respect; with ordinary care it will last for years, and produce sweet music and perfect harmony. Anyone can learn to play it with very little practice.

Price 12 cents each, by mail, post-paid
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE NEW FROG JOKER.



Bushels of fun! "Froggy" has got a very croaking and rasping voice, and when held in the hollow of the hand and made to croak, one instinctively looks around for a bullfrog. An amusing joke can be played on your friends by passing the ratchet-wheel of the frog down their coat-sleeve or the back of their coat. The ripping, tearing noise gives them a severe shock, and they heave a sigh of relief when they find that their clothes are sound and whole as before. A good joke is to make a gentleman's or lady's watch a stem winder. With the frog concealed in your hand, you take the stem of the watch between your thumb and finger, and at the same time allow the ball of your thumb to pass over the ratchet-wheel of the frog, when to the company you will seem to be winding the watch, but the noise will startle them, for 'twill sound more like winding Barnum's steam callopo than a watch, and you can keep winding indefinitely. The possessor of one of these Frog Jokers can have any amount of fun with it. It is made of bronze metal and will never wear out. Do not fail to send for one. Price, 10c., 3 for 25c. by mail, post-paid; one dozen by express, 75c.

H. F. LANG, 215 Walworth St., B'klyn., N. Y.

Ayvad's Water-Wings



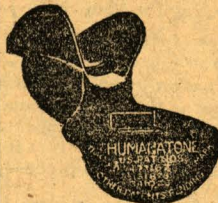
Learn to swim by one trial

Price 25 cents, Postpaid

These water-wings take up no more room than a pocket-bankerchief. They weigh 8 ounces and support from 50 to 250 pounds. With a pair anyone can learn to swim or float. For use, you have only to wet them, blow them up, and press together the two ring-marks under the mouthpiece.

H. F. LANG, 215 Walworth St., B'klyn., N. Y.

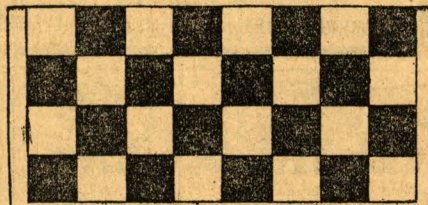
HUMANATONE.



The Improved Humanatone. This flute will be found to be the most enjoyable article ever offered; nickel plated, finely polished; each put up in a box with full instruction how to use them. Price, 18c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St. N. Y.

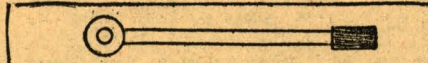
LITTLE CHECKER BOARDS.



Price 7 cents each by mail. They are made of durable colored cardboard, fold to the size of 6 1/2 x 3 1/2 inches, and are so handy in size that they can be carried in the pocket. They contain 24 red and black checkers, and are just as serviceable as the most expensive boards made. The box and lid can be fastened together in a moment by means of patent joints in the ends. Full directions printed on each box.

H. F. LANG, 215 Walworth St., B'klyn., N. Y.

DOUBLE CLAPPERS



They are handsomely made of white wood, 6 inches long, with carefully rounded edges. On each side a steel spring is secured, with flat leaden discs at the ends. They produce a tremendous clatter, and yet they can be played even better than the most expensive bones used by minstrels. The finest article of its kind on the market. Price 7 cents a pair, postpaid.

M. O'NEILL, 425 W. 56th St., N. Y.

LIGHTNING TRICK BOX.



A startling and pleasing illusion! "The ways of the world are devious," says Matthew Arnold, but the ways of the Lightning Trick Box when properly handled are admitted to be puzzling and uncertain. You take off the lid and show your friends that it is full of nice candy. Replace the lid, when you can solemnly assure your friends that you can instantly empty the box in their presence without opening it; and taking off the lid again, sure enough the candy has disappeared. Or you can change the candy into a piece of money by following the directions sent with each box. This is the neatest and best cheap trick ever invented.

Price, only 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid.

M. O'NEILL, 425 W. 56th St., N. Y.

CARTER AEROPLANE No. 1.



Will fly on a horizontal line 150 feet! Can be flown in the house, and will not injure itself nor anything in the room. The most perfect little aeroplane made. The motive power is furnished by twisted rubber bands contained within the tubular body of the machine. It is actuated by a propeller at each end revolving in opposite directions. Variation in height may be obtained by moving the planes and the balance weight. It can be made to fly either to the right or the left by moving the balance side-wise before it is released for flight. Price, 35c. each, delivered.

L. Senarens, 347 Winthrop St., Brooklyn, N. Y.

LITTLE RIP'S TEN-PINS.



In each set there are ten pins and two bowling balls, packed in a beautifully ornate box. With one of these miniature sets you can play ten-pins on your dining-room table just as well as the game can be played in a regular alley. Every game known to professional bowlers can be worked with these pins. Price, 10c. per box by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 215 Walworth St., B'klyn., N. Y.

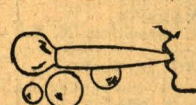
FIGHTERS.



A brand new idea for amusement. They consist of small cardboard figures of soldiers, Indians, swordsmen, etc., and are mounted on wires. The moment you twist the wires between the little figures, they instantly become animated, and charge at each other in the most astonishing manner. No end of fun with these toys. Price, 10c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

BUBBLE BLOWER.



With this device, a continuous series of bubbles can be blown. It is a wooden, cigar-shaped blower, enclosing a small vial, in which there is a piece of soap. The vial is filled with water, and a peculiarly perforated cork is inserted. When you blow in to the mouthpiece, it sets up a hydraulic pressure through the cork perforations and causes bubble after bubble to come out. No need of dipping into water once the little bottle is filled. Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid.

J. KENNEDY, 303 W. 127th St., N. Y.

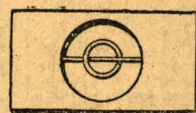
HALF MASKS.



False-faces beaten a mile! There are 7 in a set and represent an Indian, a Japanese girl, a clown, Foy Grandpa, an English Johnny Atkins and an Automobillist. Beautifully lithographed in handsome colors on a durable quality of cardboard. They have eyeholes and string perforations. Price, 6c. each, or the full set of 7 for 25c., postpaid.

M. O'NEILL, 425 W. 56th St., N. Y.

MYSTIC PUZZLE



The newest and most novel puzzle on the market. It consists of a flat piece of wood 1 1/2 x 3 inches, neatly covered with imitation leather. The cross-bar and ring in the hole are nickel-plated. The object is to get the small ring off the bar. It absolutely cannot be done by anyone not in the secret. More fun to be had with it than with any other puzzle made. It is not breakable and can be carried in the vest pocket.

Price 10 cents each by mail, post-paid

H. F. LANG, 215 Walworth St., B'klyn., N. Y.

TABLE RAISING TRICK

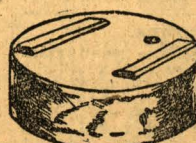


The most mystifying trick ever done by a magician. The performer shows a plain light table. He places his hand flat upon its top. The table clings to his hand as if glued there. He may swing it in the air, but the table will not leave his hand until he sets it on the floor again. The table can be inspected to show that there are no strings or wires attached.

Price 12 cents each, by mail, post-paid

M. O'NEILL, 425 W. 56th St., N. Y.

MUSICAL SEAT



The best joke out. You can have more fun than a circus, with one of these novelties. All you have to do is to place one on a chair seat (hidden under a cushion, if possible). Then tell your friend to sit down. An unearthly shriek from the little round drum will send your victim up in the air, the most puzzled and astonished mortal on earth. Don't miss getting one of these genuine laugh producers. Perfectly harmless, and never misses doing its work.

Price 20 cents each, by mail, post-paid

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

OUR TEN-CENT HAND BOOKS

No. 1. NAPOLEON'S ORACULUM AND DREAM BOOK.—Containing the great oracle of human destiny; also the true meaning of almost any kind of dreams, together with charms, ceremonies, and curious games of cards.

No. 2. HOW TO DO TRICKS.—The great book of magic and card tricks, containing full instruction on all the leading card tricks of the day, also the most popular magical illusions as performed by our leading magicians; every boy should obtain a copy of this book.

No. 3. HOW TO FLIRT.—The arts and wiles of flirtation are fully explained by this little book. Besides the various methods of handkerchief, fan, glove, parasol, window and hat flirtation, it contains a full list of the language and sentiment of flowers.

No. 4. HOW TO DANCE is the title of this little book. It contains full instructions in the art of dancing, etiquette in the ball-room and at parties, how to dress, and full directions for calling off in all popular square dances.

No. 5. HOW TO MAKE LOVE.—A complete guide to love, courtship and marriage, giving sensible advice, rules and etiquette to be observed.

No. 6. HOW TO BECOME AN ATHLETE.—Giving full instruction for the use of dumb-bells, Indian clubs, parallel bars, horizontal bars and various other methods of developing a good, healthy muscle; containing over sixty illustrations.

No. 7. HOW TO KEEP BIRDS.—Handsomely illustrated and containing full instructions for the management and training of the canary, mockingbird, bobolink, blackbird, parakeet, parrot, etc.

No. 8. HOW TO BECOME A VENTRILOQUIST.—By Harry Kennedy. Every intelligent boy reading this book of instructions can master the art, and create any amount of fun for himself and friends.

No. 10. HOW TO BOX.—The art of self-defense made easy. Containing over thirty illustrations of guards, blows, and the different positions of a good boxer. Every boy should obtain one of these useful and instructive books, as it will teach you how to box without an instructor.

No. 11. HOW TO WRITE LOVE-LETTERS.—A most complete little book, containing full directions for writing love-letters, and when to use them, giving specimen letters for young and old.

No. 12. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS TO LADIES.—Giving complete instructions for writing letters to ladies on all subjects; also letters of introduction, notes and requests.

No. 13. HOW TO DO IT; OR, BOOK OF ETIQUETTE.—It is a great life secret, and one that every young man desires to know all about. There's happiness in it.

No. 14. HOW TO MAKE CANDY.—A complete hand-book for making all kinds of candy, ice-cream, syrups, essences, etc., etc.

No. 18. HOW TO BECOME BEAUTIFUL.—One of the brightest and most valuable little books ever given to the world. Everybody wishes to know how to become beautiful, both male and female. The secret is simple, and almost costless.

No. 20. HOW TO ENTERTAIN AN EVENING PARTY.—A complete compendium of games, sports, card diversions, comic recitations, etc., suitable for parlor or drawing-room entertainment.

No. 21. HOW TO HUNT AND FISH.—The most complete hunting and fishing guide ever published. It contains full instructions about guns, hunting dogs, traps, trapping and fishing, together with description of game and fish.

No. 22. HOW TO DO SECOND SIGHT.—Heller's second sight explained by his former assistant, Fred Hunt, Jr. Explaining how the secret dialogues were carried on between the magician and the boy on the stage; also giving all the codes and signals.

No. 23. HOW TO EXPLAIN DREAMS.—This little book gives the explanation to all kinds of dreams, together with lucky and unlucky days.

No. 24. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS TO GENTLEMEN.—Containing full directions for writing to gentlemen on all subjects.

No. 25. HOW TO BECOME A GYMNAST.—Containing full instructions for all kinds of gymnastic sports and athletic exercises. Embracing thirty-five illustrations.

No. 26. HOW TO ROW, SAIL AND BUILD A BOAT.—Fully illustrated. Full instructions are given in this little book, together with instructions on swimming and riding, companion sports to boating.

No. 27. HOW TO RECITE AND BOOK OF RECITATIONS.—Containing the most popular selections in use, comprising Dutch dialect, French dialect, Yankee and Irish dialect pieces, together with many standard readings.

No. 28. HOW TO TELL FORTUNES.—Everyone is desirous of knowing what his future life will bring forth, whether happiness or misery, wealth or poverty. You can tell by a glance at this little book.

No. 29. HOW TO BECOME AN INVENTOR.—Every boy should know how inventions originated. This book explains them all, giving examples in electricity, hydraulics, magnetism, optics, pneumatics, mechanics, etc.

No. 30. HOW TO COOK.—One of the most instructive books on cooking ever published. It contains recipes for cooking meats, fish, game, and oysters; also pies, puddings, cakes and all kinds of pastry, and a grand collection of recipes.

No. 31. HOW TO BECOME A SPEAKER.—Containing fourteen illustrations, giving the different positions requisite to become a good speaker, reader and elocutionist. Also containing gems from all the popular authors of prose and poetry.

No. 32. HOW TO BEHAVE.—Containing the rules and etiquette of good society and the easiest and most approved methods of appearing to good advantage at parties, balls, the theatre, church, and in the drawing-room.

No. 35. HOW TO PLAY GAMES.—A complete and useful little book, containing the rules and regulations of billiards, bagatelle, backgammon, croquet, dominoes, etc.

No. 36. HOW TO SOLVE CONUNDRUMS.—Containing all the leading conundrums of the day, amusing riddles, curious catches and witty sayings.

No. 38. HOW TO BECOME YOUR OWN DOCTOR.—A wonderful book, containing useful and practical information in the treatment of ordinary diseases and ailments common to every family. Abounding in useful and effective recipes for general complaints.

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No. 40. HOW TO MAKE AND SET TRAPS.—Including hints on how to catch moles, weasels, otter, rats, squirrels and birds. Also how to cure skins. Copiously illustrated.

No. 41. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK END MEN'S JOKE BOOK.—Containing a great variety of the latest jokes used by the most famous end men. No amateur minstrels is complete without this wonderful little book.

No. 42. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK STUMP SPEAKER.—Containing a varied assortment of stump speeches, Negro, Dutch and Irish. Also end men's jokes.

No. 43. HOW TO BECOME A MAGICIAN.—Containing the grandest assortment of magical illusions ever placed before the public. Also tricks with cards, incantations, etc.

No. 44. HOW TO WRITE IN AN ALBUM.—A grand collection of Album Verses suitable for any time and occasion; embracing Lines of Love, Affection, Sentiment, Humor, Respect, and Condolence; also Verses Suitable for Birthdays and Weddings.

No. 45. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK MINSTREL GUIDE AND JOKE BOOK.—Something new and very instructive. Every boy should obtain this book, as it contains full instructions for organizing an amateur minstrel troupe.

No. 46. HOW TO MAKE AND USE ELECTRICITY.—A description of the wonderful uses of electricity and electro magnetism; together with full instructions for making Electric Toys, Batteries, etc. By George Trevel, A. M., M. D. Containing over fifty illustrations.

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No. 50. HOW TO STUFF BIRDS AND ANIMALS.—A valuable book, giving instructions in collecting, preparing, mounting and preserving birds, animals and insects.

No. 51. HOW TO DO TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Containing explanations of the general principles of sleight-of-hand applicable to card tricks; of card tricks with ordinary cards, and not requiring sleight-of-hand; of tricks involving sleight-of-hand, or the use of specially prepared cards. Illustrated.

No. 52. HOW TO PLAY CARDS.—Giving the rules and full directions for playing Euchre, Cribbage, Casino, Forty-five, Rounce, Pedro Sancho, Draw Poker, Auction Pitch, All Fours, and many other popular games of cards.

No. 53. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS.—A wonderful little book, telling you how to write to your sweetheart, your father, mother, sister, brother, employer; and, in fact, everybody and anybody you wish to write to.

No. 54. HOW TO KEEP AND MANAGE PETS.—Giving complete information as to the manner and method of raising, keeping, taming, breeding, and managing all kinds of pets; also giving full instructions for making cages, etc. Fully explained by twenty-eight illustrations.

No. 55. HOW TO COLLECT STAMPS AND COINS.—Containing valuable information regarding the collecting and arranging of stamps and coins. Handsomely illustrated.

No. 56. HOW TO BECOME AN ENGINEER.—Containing full instructions how to become a locomotive engineer; also directions for building a model locomotive; together with a full description of everything an engineer should know.

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No. 62. HOW TO BECOME A WEST POINT MILITARY CADET.—Explains how to gain admittance, course of Study, Examinations, Duties, Staff of Officers, Post Guard, Police Regulations, Fire Department, and all a boy should know to be a cadet. By Lu Senarens.

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